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This Book

BELONGS TO

Am Deen
Feb 7 10th 1826

If thou art borrow'd by a friend,
Right welcome shall he be,
To read, to study, not to lend,
But to return to me.

Not that imparted knowledge doth
Diminish learning's store,
But books, I find, if often lent,
Return to me no more.

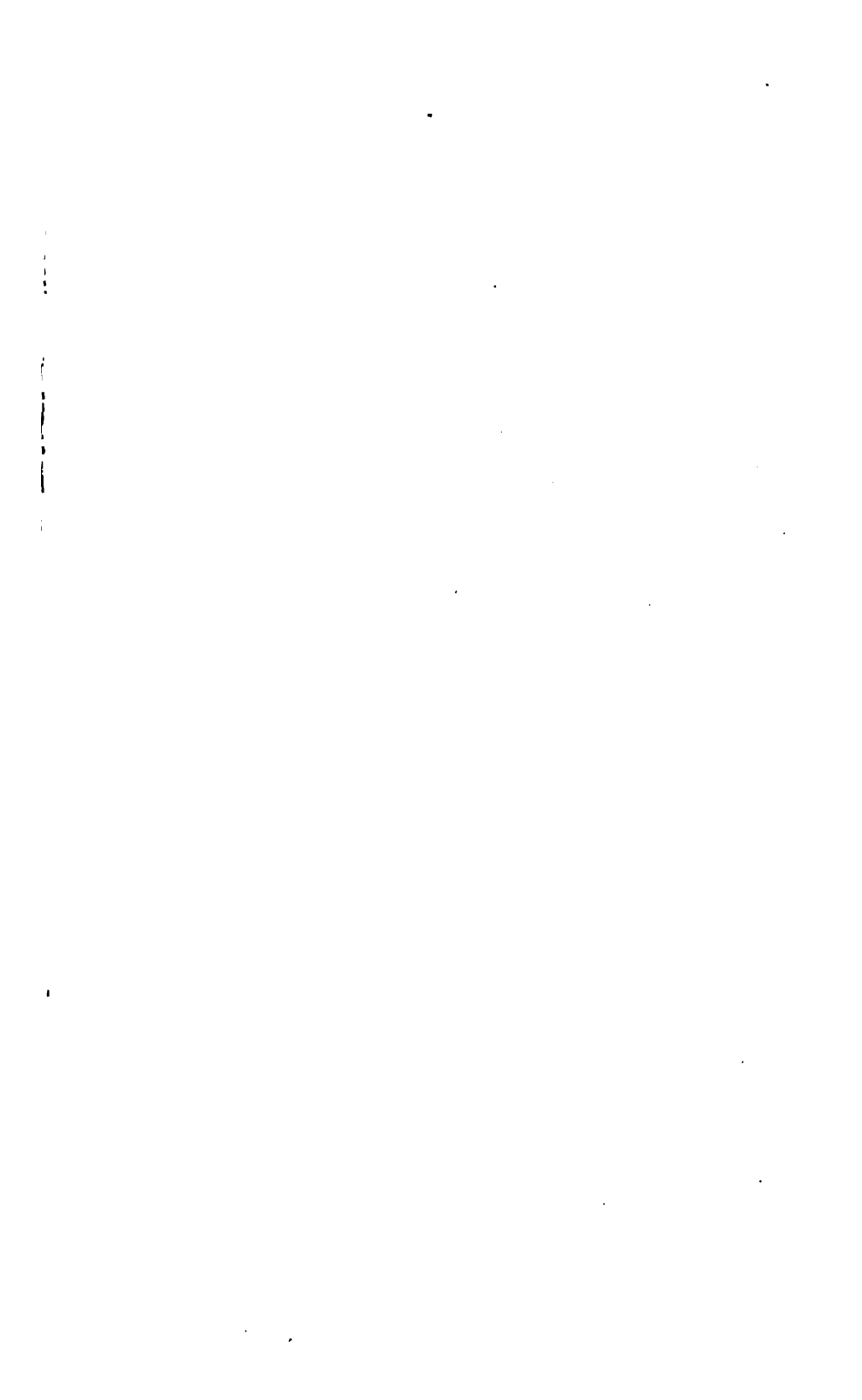
Keep cleanly, return duly,
with the corners of the leaves not
turned down.

76 & M. Whiting



18 MAY 1966







CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

GOD OF ISRAEL,

IN

A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

By WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD-STREET,
AND AT MONKWELL-STREET MEETING.

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1802.



CONTEMPLATIONS, &c.

LETTER I.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

CHICKLEWOOD.

*Dear son in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ,
grace and peace be multiplied.*

I HAVE for some time had it upon my mind to send thee some account of my late goings on, having for some few weeks back been much indulged and helped by the Holy Spirit of promise, of whose influence, help, and energetic intercession at the throne of grace, I have been very watchful and observant; and, on the other hand, could not but wonder at the backwardness, deadness, dryness, and barrenness, both in power and in expression, when his sensible influence was withheld from me. His divine person, and his most benign influences and operations, were for many days my meditation, both by night and by day; and, during this time, these things were the principal subjects of my ministry; and, had I wrote them then, I have no doubt

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but thou wouldst have felt the blessed effects; but now it is not so with me; my harp is upon the willows: and, with respect to sensible enjoyments, the Comforter that should relieve my soul seems to be far from me. Oh, what is all religion without the operation of the Holy Spirit! An empty shew, and a weariness to the flesh.

I thought not a little of his divine personality; and wondered much how any man living, who reads the scriptures, could ever have the effrontery to deny his being a divine person. But the world knows him not. *I will send you a comforter whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* He is therefore to be known by all believers: and those who do know him will glorify him and honour him; reverence him and adore him: and we know that all who are destitute of him, and strangers to his operations, are sensual men, and know nothing but what they know naturally.—Hence some have called the Holy Spirit no more than a *quality*, or an attribute of God; others an *influence* only; others no more than a *name*; avowing that there is but one person in the Godhead, but a plurality of names:—as Simon Magus gave it out, that he himself was *God the Father* in Samaria, the *Word* in Judea, and the *Spirit* in the other parts of the world. Surely that monster of a man must be the father or ringleader of all heretics. But we know that no curious diving, no speculative prying,

prying, nor presumptuous intruding, will meet with the divine approbation. *God resisteth the proud.* But O how safe, how sweet, how salutary, how satisfactory, how humbling and softening, are the sweet influences, operations, discoveries, and communications, of the Holy Spirit upon the souls of the children of God!

Various things are meant by the word *Spirit* in the holy scriptures:—as wind, the spirit of beasts, and the souls of men, and angels, both good and bad. But the Holy Ghost is distinguished from all these, being emphatically called God, not in a figurative or metaphoric, but in an absolute sense; *to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.* Col. ii. 2. In which passage the Holy Ghost stands first in the Holy Trinity, and he is distinct from the Father and from Christ: and surely, if he were not essentially God, to all intents and purposes, he never would have inspired the apostle to name and place him as God before the Father. The church also is called *the temple of the Holy Ghost*; *as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them.* No spirit whatever, that is mentioned in all the book of God, is ever numbered with the persons in the Holy Trinity, or ranked with the Father and the Son, except the Holy Ghost. Nor is the church the property, the temple, or the habitation, of any but of God alone: and, as the church is called the temple of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost must be God.

A ghost is a spirit. The Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit is one and the same in the original, as say the learned. Now what I have upon my mind, to write to my dear brother, is upon this important subject: and, however weakly, or however imperfectly I may express myself, I am fully persuaded, by my own experience, that it is most safe, and ever will be satisfactory and establishing to the elect of God, who are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit, to believe as I do: while the contrary is most dangerous, if not perilous:—I mean, that the Holy Ghost must be acknowledged to be a divine person by all those who are sanctified, and who hope to be saved. They must acknowledge *the mystery of God, of the Father, and of Christ*; for we are baptized in the name of all the three, and therefore, in our holy profession, we must acknowledge this greatest mystery of all mysteries.

A *person*, according to the account of learned men, is an individual being, an intelligent agent, who is singular, and subsists, lives, speaks, understands, acts, and works—and such is the Holy Ghost. Nor is there a distinct personal character but what the holy scriptures apply to him;—such as *I, me, him, he, his, thou*. As for instance, *Separate ME Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when HE is come HE shall guide you into all truth: Again, I will send you a comforter, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth HIM not, neither knoweth him; but ye know HIM, for*

HE

HE dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. Again, *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? Are these HIS doings?* Again, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I go up into heaven, THOU art there.* Sure I am that these personal characters cannot be applied to a name, or to a quality, in God, or to an influence from him, or to an accident, or to a transient impression; much less to a nonentity. It is true, that personal characters, and personal actions, are sometimes ascribed to things inanimate; as, *The trees went forth to choose themselves a king, and invited the vine and the olive to reign over them, who refused; and the bramble bid them put themselves under his shadow.* The red sea also is represented as seeing and fleeing. *The floods lift up their hands on high, and the little hills skip like lambs.* Yet we have no voice from any of these, only dumb signs at best; these all wanted persons to speak for them. Jotham speaks for the trees and the bramble; Habakkuk speaks the motions of the sea, and David the actions of the little hills. But the Holy Spirit wants none to speak for him; he can speak of himself, and for himself. He spoke in Adam, giving names to all creatures. He spoke to Philip—*Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.* He spoke to Peter—*The Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee; arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, nothing doubting.* The Spirit said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may,*

rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. The Holy Spirit not only speaks; but all that have ever spoken to any good purpose have been taught to speak by him; he brings the things to their minds, puts words in their mouths, and teaches them how to pronounce them. *Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.* 1 Cor. ii. 13. The Spirit put a word in Balaam's mouth, and bade him speak thus and thus; and *the apostles spake as the Spirit gave them utterance.* He not only speaks to the faints, and in them, but he teaches us in some measure to discern between those whom he teaches to speak, and those who follow their own spirit, and speak a vision out of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. And how evident this is in all who write or speak of divine things without the Spirit's teaching! What flagrant errors, self-contradictions, inconsistencies, confusion, and darkening of counsel; doth appear! Instead of making rough places plain, and crooked things straight, they make the plainest places rough, and the straightest things crooked; and, instead of going through the gates, and removing the stumbling blocks, and casting up the high-way, they grope like the blind for the wall, cause many to stumble at the law, and destroy the way of our paths. And, if at any time any of them appear to be tolerably sound in the letter, yet the deep things of the text, the unctuous matter of it, or the choice experience of the holy penmen that lies

lies hid in it, is never dived into, nor brought up; the glorious beauty of it is obscured, the surface of it is skimmed over; a few parallel texts are brought in, and dark constructions put upon the words, and the passage left more obscure than when the workman began. There is nothing in your ears but swelling words and empty sound; and nothing in your soul but leanings and beggary. Instead of watering the trees of righteousness, or refreshing the bowels of the saints, these clouds without rain rather exhale or dry up all the dew of heaven that is on the soul, however refreshed before. Such workmen obscure and becloud the Spirit's work, cast a dimness on the brightest evidences, contract the most enlarged heart, and imprison those whom the Lord has made free indeed. This I know by woful experience. And it must be so; for *the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Personal properties also, or those properties and things which are ascribed to persons, are also ascribed to the Holy Spirit—such as *will, power, mind, judgment, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, love, joy, grief, vexation, &c.* for instance—*All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he WILL. Mighty signs and wonders by the POWER of the Holy Ghost. And God that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the MIND of the spirit. And The Lord of hosts shall be for a spirit of JUDGMENT to him that*

sitteth in judgment: upon him shall rest the spirit of WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING, the spirit of COUNSEL and MIGHT, the spirit of KNOWLEDGE and of the fear of the Lord. Again, *Now I beseech you, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the LOVE of the Spirit.* Again, *You received the word with JOY of the Holy Ghost.* *GRIEVE not the Spirit of God, by which ye are sealed.* But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, till he turned to be their enemy; and fought against them. I cannot see how all the above-mentioned things can with propriety be ascribed to any thing but a *person*. To apply them to a *quality*, an *accident*, a *name*, or a *nonentity*, must be absurd to the last degree. And I have often thought that, if men were allowed to take the same liberties with the evidences of a purchase, a man's will and testament, title-deeds, and writings of estates, &c. that some take with the word of God, there are lawyers and counsellors wise enough to dispute every landholder in the nation out of all that he hath, and even out of his own personality and existence too. For it is but to prove that there is no such man, no such person; that it is only a name; and all the relative or personal characters are to be understood in a figurative or an allegorical sense; and that it means no more than a quality in man, or a power put forth by man on certain occasions; or that it signifies only the breath of a man's mouth, an accident, or a transient emanation, flowing out with his

his words when he speaks.—Allow a wise lawyer or counsellor to go this way to work, and we should soon see the greatest landholders in the nation begging in the streets.

Now, my dear brother, I must leave this subject for the present, submitting this my scribble to your perusal. And, should your thoughts meet with any rubs in the way, as they rove; should any thing grate upon your ears; should any thing sound harsh; should any of the things appear to clash, or seem unintelligible; or appear low, mean, unworthy, or unbecoming the glorious subject; signify the same, and offer your thoughts freely—it will be kindly received by him who subscribes himself, in undissembled love,

Yours in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON,

LETTER II.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

Dearl; beloved in the Lord,

HAVING now a little time on my hands, I will reassume my former subject. When I began the last my mind was dark and my heart cold. Much work and many engagements at the time of Christmas had banished my former sweet meditations far from me; so that, when I came to sit down to put them to paper, I had them far to fetch, and all to collect afresh; but before I had been long at the work they came about me again, and I found myself rather happy in the return of my pleasing visiters. I left off after I had offered a few thoughts on the personal characters which the scriptures of truth ascribe to the Holy Ghost; and I shall now mention some few works and actions which the scriptures ascribe to the Spirit, and which are personal works and actions, such as none but real persons can do.

None but persons can bear record to the truth of any contract, covenant, or agreement; nor be admitted as a witness in such cases, or to any deed, or upon any trial whatever. *But there are three that bear RECORD in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the*

the Holy Ghost: and there are three that bear witness on earth; the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood. And we are witnesses of these things, says the apostle; and so is also the Holy Ghost; whom God hath given to them that obey him. Acts v. 32. The Spirit bears witness to the truth of the word; he gives testimony to the word of his grace, and to the truth of their commission whom he sends to preach it. He brings the righteousness of Christ to the soul; we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. And he bears witness to our justification, and to our adoption. *He that believeth hath the witness in himself.* And even in the court of a believer's conscience his witness is so powerful and effectual, that neither law, devil, nor sin, which is represented as crying to heaven; no, nor even conscience itself, is suffered to speak. And this witness is true, and is no lie; and we are to abide in him. I know that Jacob set up a pillar at Bethel; and that Laban and Jacob gathered an heap of stones together at Mount Gilead, and called them witnesses: but these were only to help the treacherous memory of persons, who are apt to forget, as Jacob did, when God bid him arise, and go up to Bethel, where he anointed the pillar.

Power and authority; qualifying, equipping, and investing men with offices, must be personal works. *You shall receive POWER after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. To one is given the word of wisdom, to another faith, to another divers kinds of tongues, to another*

*after the interpretation of tongues ; and all these worketh
 that one and the self-same spirit. Take heed to yourselves,
 and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made
 you overseers. Acts xx. 28. And, as they ministered
 to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate
 me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have
 called them. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost,
 departed. Acts xiii. 2. 4. And they were forbidden
 of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. And they
 assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them
 not. Now, upon the whole, if speaking, teaching,
 leading ; qualifying of men with grace, gifts, and
 abilities for the ministerial work ; furnishing them
 with wisdom and knowledge, and giving them di-
 vers kinds of tongues ; appointing them to the office
 of overseers, and telling them what to say ; giving
 readiness of mind, aptitude and utterance in speak-
 ing ; telling them where to go, and forbidding them
 to go here and there, where he had no work for
 them to do, at least not at that season—if these are
 not personal works and actions, what are ? There
 are some, I believe, in the world, who deny the very
 being of a God—*The fool hath said in his heart, There
 is no God.* These must be left to be convinced by
 the torments of the damned. But I believe there
 are very few, who profess to believe the Bible, but
 will allow that there is one divine person in the
 Godhead, which is in general allowed to be God the
 Father ; though many will not allow the Saviour to
 be a person, although he is his only-begotten Son,
 the*

the Son of the Father in truth and love: and still less will they allow divine personality to the Holy Ghost; though the scriptures ascribe the same personal characters, properties, works, and actions, to the Son, and to the Spirit, as they do to God the Father. Therefore, if the Father be a person, the Son and Spirit must. The work of creation is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as well as to the Son and to the Father:—*The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*—He operated upon the confused chaos, and brought it into beautiful order. *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.* Job xxvi. 18. *By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth.* Psalm xxxiii. 6. Here the creation of the heavens are ascribed to the essential Word, and to the holy Spirit. *'Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth.* Psalm xxxiv. 30. Here is the work of creation ascribed to the Spirit, and it is he that renews the face of the earth every spring. The creation of man is ascribed to the holy Spirit also. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* Job xxxiii. 4.

Nor was the holy Spirit a spectator when Christ appeared for our salvation. It was the Holy Ghost that came upon the Virgin Mary at her conception, and that formed the human nature which Christ assumed, and preserved it from every stain or spot of original sin, and then rested upon him with all his fulness

fulness of gifts and grace. He applied the word which the Saviour spoke, and displayed his power in the miracles that he wrought; and those that blasphemed either his words or his power, blasphemed against the Holy Ghost. It was through the eternal Spirit that he offered himself in sacrifice to God, and it was the same Spirit that quickened our Lord's body in the tomb. *He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* And under his great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and hence it is said that he is *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the [testimony of] the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.* Rom. i. 4.

Making the saints meet for heaven lies much upon the Holy Ghost. It is he that applies the word, and makes it effectual: the word comes in power, and in the Holy Ghost; he convinces of sin; and it is the Spirit that quickens the dead sinner; and, as a Spirit of illumination and understanding, he enlightens him, testifies of Christ to him, works faith in him to believe, regenerates and renews him; takes the Lord's righteousness and peace, and shews them to the sinner; works the life and power of reigning grace in him, and sets up the kingdom of God in the heart, which stands in power, in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The law of faith by the Saviour, which the isles were to wait for; is applied and made effectual by the Holy Ghost, who is our last law-giver. *The law of the Spirit of life*

life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. He bears witness to our adoption, and empowers us to claim it; produces the first-fruits of glory in our hearts, which are called the first-fruits of the Spirit; and is the pledge and earnest of the future inheritance. He seals us up to the day of redemption; renews us, or restores the lost image of God to us, and sanctifies us, and carries on his sanctifying, renewing, and transforming work in us, and makes us meet for the inheritance with the saints in light:—*that the offering up of the Gentiles may be accepted, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

Sins against the Holy Spirit, in his work and operations, are taken notice of in a very particular manner, and are highly resented, even in the saints, and punished with peculiar severity in the daring and presumptuous. The Israelites in the wilderness vexed his Holy Spirit, till he turned to be their enemy, and fought against them. Some of the young Gentile converts grieved him, and many were sickly and weak among them, and many slept, for their unbecoming behaviour at the Lord's table. The Holy Spirit (says Christ) shall glorify me. And the Spirit is grieved when the Lord is dishonoured. Ananias and Sapphira, agreeing together in sin, tempted the Spirit of the Lord, and Satan filled their hearts to lie to the Holy Ghost. *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God,* says Peter, Acts v. Therefore the Holy Ghost is God. And they were
 both

both struck dead upon the spot for it. Great and innumerable sins against God in his law, as in Manasseh and others, have been forgiven; and many awful things done and spoken against the Son of man have been pardoned, as may be seen in Paul. But those that do despite to the Spirit of Grace; who willingly and wilfully counteract his operations and designs in the souls of God's people; and who see his power, and yet oppose, hate, and fight against it; and who ridicule and blaspheme both the author and his operations; never have been, nor ever will be forgiven;—for *the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.* Matt. xii. 31. And can any man in his senses believe, or attempt to affirm, that the all-wise God, the Judge of all the earth, who is rich in mercy and abundant in goodness and in truth, would exclude men from all possibility of pardon, and doom them to eternal damnation, for sinning against a *name*, an *accident*, or only a *quality*, *attribute*, *perfection*, or a *power* in God, which may be transiently put forth, and displayed as an operation on man? Surely sinning against God the Father himself, which is sinning against all the revealed perfections and attributes of his nature, must be a more heinous crime than sinning against a single quality in him. And yet all manner of sins and blasphemies, committed against him in the law, have been forgiven unto men (Matt. xii. 31); but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost never was, nor ever will be. And why this sin unto death should be emphatically called

the great transgression, I cannot conceive, if the Holy Ghost, against whom it is committed; be not the great and terrible God.

The dispensation of the gospel, in the administration of it, is peculiarly his: hence it is called *the ministration of the Spirit*, that exceeds the former ministration in glory. 2 Cor. iii. 8. He is the operator and worker of all good from God, through Christ, in men; and of all the glory and praise that redounds to God by men; and will be greatly concerned in the first resurrection, the resurrection of the just. *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and the Spirit will attend it, and quicken them all, as it is written.—But, if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* Rom. viii. 11.

I must beg my dear brother's pardon for the length of this epistle—My pen ran on; and, being deeply engaged in the subject, I had quite forgotten myself. Ponder these matters over attentively, and send me your thoughts upon the subject. I have written them as I see and believe them; and so to see and believe, in my judgment, is to walk in the ways of God safely.

Ever yours,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER III.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, *Lewes, Sussex.*

*Dearly beloved in the Lord Jesus—Perfect peace, and
at such a time.*

IF I have not wearied my beloved brother with my epistles on the pleasing subject, I will resume it and proceed. That the Holy Spirit is properly a person, I have endeavoured to prove from scripture; and that he is a divine person appears as plain, because he personally subsists and has life in himself. *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.* John v. 26. And so hath the Spirit life in himself. This appears in his creation-work.—*The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* Job xxxiii. 4. He quickened, animated, and inspired Adam, and furnished him with a life of love. What power but a divine person, who has life in himself, could form a living soul in Adam, and give him life, righteousness, and true holiness? He is the author of natural and spiritual life.—*It is the Spirit that quickeneth.* John vi. 23. And, as he giveth spiritual life, so he maintains it; hence he is called *a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life.* John iv. 14. And all the elect of God, who are by
nature

nature dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath, even as others—these doth the Holy Spirit quicken. *I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live.* Ezek. xxxvii. 14. Hence our Saviour says, *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* John vii. 38, 39. It was the Spirit that quickened the Saviour's body in the tomb. He was *put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* 1 Peter iii. 18. Hence the Spirit is expressly called *life*; and he will, at the last day, quicken all that ever died in the Lord. *And, if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. I have sowed and you have reaped; and he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto eternal life; when he that sows and them that reap shall rejoice together.* The Spirit, as a well of living water, shall spring up into everlasting life. This is the glorious harvest promised, as the present is the seed-time, in which the blessed crop (that we have already got in hope) is sown; *for he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* Gal. vi. 8. If, therefore, the Spirit be not a person, and a divine person too, who has eternal life in himself, we never could reap everlasting life from him by yielding spiritual obedience to him. I say spiritual obedience,

because we are said to serve *in newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*, which is only bodily exercise. And we are said, likewise, to worship God in the Spirit, and to walk in newness of life. Furthermore, the names which, in the strictest sense, are peculiar to God, are by the scriptures given to the Holy Ghost. As Jehovah; which is an incommunicable name of God.—*Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high God over all the earth.* Psalm lxxxiii. 18. He, whom the children of Israel tempted and proved, vexed and rebelled against, was Jehovah. And Isaiah ascribes it to the Holy Ghost, *But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them.* Isaiah lxiii. 10. The apostle ascribes the same to him. *Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest.* Heb. vii. 11. Isaiah, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, ascribe this tempting and rebelling of the Israelites to be done against the Holy Ghost; therefore the Holy Ghost must be Jehovah, and so it is written, *And be called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted Jehovah, saying, Is Jehovah*

Jehovah among us or not? Exod. xvii. 7. It is therefore plain that the Holy Ghost is Jehovah, which incommunicable name is peculiar to the most high God.

The Holy Ghost is called God, not in a figurative, but in a proper sense. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* 1 Cor. iii. 16. What is not essentially God cannot be the Spirit of God; therefore the Holy Ghost is God. The Spirit of Jehovah is Jehovah the Spirit; the Spirit of God is God the Spirit. And this rule may be seen in the Epistle to the Corinthians. *Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.* 2 Cor. iii. 16, 17. The Spirit of the Lord is the Lord the Spirit. Hence we may safely conclude that the Holy Ghost is JEHOVAH, GOD, and LORD.

And, to shew the divine equality of the adorable persons in the Godhead, each person at times is named or placed first. Sometimes Christ is named first. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Sometimes the Holy Spirit stands first.—*That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding; to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.* Col. ii. 2. Sometimes God the Father stands first.—*For there are three that bear record in*

heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 1 John v. 7. Now, as this last order is not always attended to, it shews that one is not before or after another; and that one is not greater or less than the other. Again—*Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all.* 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6. Here the Holy Ghost takes the name of Spirit, Lord, and God, to himself; and therefore he must be the Spirit, Lord, and God. Sometimes the Holy Ghost is prayed to as God. *But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.* 2 Thess. iii. 3, 4, 5. The Lord, who is faithful, and who establishes the churches, and keeps them from evil, and in whom Paul places his confidence, is the Holy Ghost; and he is prayed to, that he may direct the saints' hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. The Holy Spirit is prayed to as a divine person, to direct souls into the love of God, who is another person; and into the patient waiting for Christ, which is another, and a distinct person from the former two.

That the Holy Ghost is truly and essentially God appears from the scriptures, which ascribe divine attributes

tributes and perfections to him; such as *eternity*.—*Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God.* Heb. ix. 14. *Omniscience also—The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God: for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. *Omnipotence* is ascribed to him.—*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.* Luke i. 35. He is called *the Spirit of counsel and might*, Isaiah xv. 2. And *the Spirit of power and of a sound mind*. 2 Tim. i. 7. How can he be called the Spirit of power, the Spirit of might, and the power of the Highest, if he be not the Almighty God? Nothing can be the power of the Highest but Omnipotence itself; and whatever is omnipotent is God.

Omnipresence.—*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.* Psalm cxxxix. 7—10. Here is the Holy Spirit, and his presence, and his hand, in all places; therefore he must be omnipresent, and immensity itself, seeing there is no going from him, either in heaven or in earth, in the sea, or in hell.

Holiness also.—He is declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the

resurrection from the dead. Rom. i. 4. If he be the Spirit of Holiness, he must have holiness in himself, as he has; and he is the author of holiness in all the saints, for they are sanctified by the Holy Ghost, who dwells in them. *Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost? Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* 2 Cor. vi. 16. He is called the Spirit of truth, and truth itself, who leads the saints into all truth. The Spirit of wisdom also;—and, if he be the Spirit of truth, and truth itself, then he must be divine verity and divine wisdom, or he cannot be the Spirit of truth and wisdom. All these things, properly considered, are sufficient to prove that the Holy Ghost is a *person*, a *divine person*, and therefore truly and properly God.

I must conclude, wishing my dear brother much of the presence of God in this new year. And when it is well with thee remember

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER IV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Suffex.

Beloved,

SINCE I sent off the last, my head and my heart have been conceiving and bringing forth again, insomuch that I think I have more oil in my cruse now than when I began. *My horn is exalted like the horns of an unicorn, and I am anointed with fresh oil.* Therefore I will proceed to shew that the Holy Ghost is a distinct person. He is said to proceed from the Father.—*When the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.* John xv. 26. If he proceed from the Father, he must be distinct from him from whom he proceeds. Again—*It is expedient for you that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but, if I depart, I will send him.* Here the Spirit proceeds from the Son also, as well as from the Father. And, as he is distinct from the Father, so he is also from the Son—I will send him. The Spirit, which is sent, is a distinct person from him that sends him. He is likewise called *another*.—*I will pray the Father, and he shall give*

give you another comforter. God is called the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort: the Saviour is called the Consolation of Israel, which good old Simeon waited to see; and Christ, being about to leave his flock, promises to send them another comforter, that should abide with them for ever; and, if he be another comforter, he must be distinct both from the Father and the Son, or else he cannot be another, but must be the same.

I believe that God the Father never did any works from which the Son or the Spirit were excluded. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doth the Son likewise.* John v. 19. Nor did he ever work any work from which the Spirit was excluded. Their distinct personality appears in all their divine operations; and in every work they seem to be jointly concerned. In the secret councils of old, and in the decree of election, and in the covenant of grace which was made from everlasting, they were jointly concerned: there was the Father choosing, the Son in whom the choice was made undertaking to save, and the Spirit to sanctify and make obedient the objects chosen. *Eleet according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* 1 Pet. i. 2. This will appear more plain in the following passage, where you have an account of the covenant, and of the persons in the
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Holy Trinity altogether. *As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* Isa. lix, 21. Here is the Father and the Son agreeing about a covenant; *I have made a covenant with my chosen.* The Son is undertaking to become man; it is to be a covenant by sacrifice. He undertakes in our behalf, and for us: the promise of eternal life and the Holy Spirit are to come upon him; this the Holy Ghost undertakes to do; and these are to abide upon him, the head of influence, till salvation is finished. And, when Christ was glorified, then the Word and Spirit were to be sent forth by the Covenant Head to the chosen seed. The Spirit is to apply the benefits of the cross, and proclaim liberty to the elect—*By the blood of thy covenant I have sent thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.* They are called Christ's prisoners, because they are given unto him to redeem, sanctify, and save.

In the work of creation the distinct personality and operations of the Holy Trinity plainly appear. There is God the Father creating all things by Jesus Christ, Eph. iii. 9; and there is the Holy Spirit moving upon the face of the waters (Gen. i. 2), bringing the confused chaos into its present beautiful

ful form and order. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Psalm xxxiii. 6. Here is the Lord, and the essential Word which was with God and was God, creating the world; and the breath of his mouth, which is the Holy Ghost, equally concerned in the work; for *by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens.* Job xxvi. 13.

Nor need it be thought strange that the Holy Ghost is compared to breath and to the wind; seeing, as a learned man observes, that “ generation expresses the Son’s distinct mode of subsisting in the divine Essence, so spiration may also express the Spirit’s distinct mode of subsisting therein; and, perhaps, is the true reason of his bearing this name.” And, as he is called the Breath of the Almighty, and as Christ breathed on the apostles and said unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*; the procession of the Holy Spirit is beautifully set forth thereby.

There was a council held among the divine persons about the creation of man.—*Let us*, says the Father to the Son, *make man in our image, after our likeness*; and the Holy Ghost was breathed into him, who formed his soul and quickened him. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* In those words, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*, a plurality of persons appear; but in the last text, *So God made man in his*
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own image, the unity of the Divine Essence is preserved; the first account being in the plural number, and the last in the singular.

In the government of the world the Trinity appears to be equally concerned. This may be seen in the king of Babylon's visions: *I saw in the visions of my head, upon my bed; and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven.* Dan. iv. 13. This is in the singular number. *This matter (says Daniel) is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy Ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* Dan. iv. 17. I know that many are of opinion that these watchers are angels; but that cannot be; for the decree is called the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the words of the Holy Ones; but angels are not of God's council, nor have they any hand in making God's decrees. *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord; or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him?* Isa. xl. 13, 14. What is called the decree of the Watchers and of the Holy Ones, is explained by the prophet. *This is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king.* Dan. iv. 24. Besides, though the angels are holy creatures, yet three of them cannot be emphatically called *the Holy Ones*, for there are twenty thousand of holy angels, and there are holy souls in heaven and holy saints on earth. But God in three persons is the
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fountain of holiness. Nor need we wonder at the Trinity being called Watchers, seeing God the Father, Son, and Spirit, watch over all the saints. He that keepeth thee will not slumber.—*Behold, be that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.* Psal. cxxi. 3. And, unless the Lord keep the city of Zion, all other watchmen wake but in vain. Thus do the Holy Trinity work jointly together, and their distinct personality is seen in all their glorious works; and so it will further appear in every branch of the work of salvation.

As in the mission and commission of Christ—*From the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me.* Isa. xlviii. 16. Here is Christ who is the ME that is sent, and the Lord God and his Spirit which sent him. If a trinity of names is meant, and not persons, as a wise man observes, it should have been worded thus: “And now I myself, and myself, have sent myself.” This prophecy had its accomplishment just before Christ entered on his ministry, at his baptism. Christ was upon the earth, the Holy Ghost descending in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, saying, *Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.* These are the Lord God and his Spirit sending Christ forth, and bearing their testimony both to his sonship and to his appointment.

Salvation also is ascribed to all the three persons, who are equally concerned in it. The Father
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speaks thus: *But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God; and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen.* Hosea i. 7. Thus the Father bears testimony to his only-begotten Son, and tells us that he is the Lord God by whom he saves us; and we believe him, not doubting but God is a faithful and true witness, and must be a better judge of his own Son, and what he is, than all the Arians and Socinians in the world. God the Father saves us by the Lord our God, who is the Son; hence he is called *Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins.* Matt. i. 21. Nor is the Holy Ghost excluded from the work of salvation; for the Father, who tells us that he will have mercy upon the house of Judah, tells us also how this mercy shall come to us, even by the Holy Spirit—*But according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Tit. iii. 5. Thus are all the three divine persons engaged in our salvation. Hence we read of *wells*, more wells than one, in which salvation is to be had—*Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* Isa. xii. 3.

Again, an empty name cannot write nor bear record. How does a fictitious name appear in a court of law, when there is no person to be found that bears that name, or is called by it? *But there are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.*

1 John

1 John v. 7, 8. And this is not a trinity of names accommodated to the making of a covenant, as some suppose; for a name cannot be a father nor a son. So, likewise, if there be but one person in the Trinity, there cannot be either a Son or a Father; he that denies either, denies both.—*He is anticrist that denieth the Father and the Son: whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.* 1 John ii. 22, 23. None, therefore, but persons can bear record: but the persons in the Holy Trinity do bear record; and the record that they bear is to the sonship of Christ; and their distinct record stands in the holy scriptures. The Father's record, twice written, is this—*Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.* Luke iii. 22. Again, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* Matt. xvii. 5. The Lord's testimony of himself stands upon record thus—*Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.* John x. 36, 37. For this blasphemy, as the wicked Jews called it, was Christ condemned; and this he never denied, but sealed it with his blood. The record of the Holy Ghost is to the same truth.—*Paul, a servant, separated unto the gospel of God, which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness,*

holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Rom. i.

1—4. This is the witness which is recorded by the Spirit that Christ is the Son of God; not in name, for there is no power in an empty name; but he is the Son of God with power, the Omnipotent, *the First and the Last, the Almighty. Rev. xi. 8.* And this is declared, or manifested, by his own resurrection from the dead—*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:* this is the testimony borne, and recorded *by the Spirit of Holiness.* Now, that the threefold record, borne by the Father, Son, and Spirit, is to the sonship of Christ, appears plain from the apostle John's conclusion—*There are three that bear record in heaven, and three that bear witness on earth. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made himself a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*

1 John v. 7—10. Thus God's witness, that he hath testified and which stands upon record, is called the testification and record that God gave of his Son. The natural inferences are these: 1. That none but those who believe in the only-begotten Son of God have the witness of the Spirit in themselves. 2. That all those who tell us that Christ is only a name, or a mere creature, are infidels; they believe not the record that God gave of his Son. And, 3. The infamy charged upon such is, that they

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make God a liar, than which nothing can be worse; and such liars are all our Arians and Socinians, and therefore their witness is nothing worth.

Thus the holy Three bear record, which a trinity of names cannot do; for, as I before observed, if a fictitious name appear in a court of law they can do nothing with it, being but an empty name: and it must be some person or other that must have written that; but the Holy Trinity want none to write for them (unless it be in condescension to our weakness), for they can all write for themselves. Thus saith God the Father: *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Jer. xxxi. 33. And God the Son promises to write the following inscription upon all conquerors: *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.* Rev. iii. 12. And the Holy Ghost's hand-writing is recorded thus: *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart.* 2 Cor. iii. 3. The law that God puts into the hidden parts is shedding abroad his everlasting

everlasting love in our hearts (love being the fulfilling of the law) by the Holy Ghost given unto us. Writing his law in the mind, is persuading us by his Spirit, and working in us the law of faith : *The Lord shall persuade Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.* What Habakkuk was ordered to write plain upon tables, that he who runs might read, God writes on the fleshy tables of our hearts, by justifying us and giving us faith and life; and in this the vision speaks in our conscience—*The just man shall live by his faith.*...

Christ writes upon us the name of his God; that is, he gives us an experience of that glorious covenant-name which God proclaimed before Moses—*The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth; pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.* Pardon comes by the blood of Christ; grace, goodness, and mercy, all come together when God reveals his dear Son in us. To write upon us the name of the city of God, is to give us the happy enjoyment of peace, which is the fruit and effect of imputed righteousness; and to bless us with the presence of God. The city is to be called Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there; or the city of God's presence; God promising to dwell in Zion for ever, it being his resting place, and he having desired it. The Lord's new name seems to be that worn upon his vesture and on his thigh, and is, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; which name he will achieve by the destruction of

antichrist, and taking to himself his great power and reigning, when the kingdoms of this world will become his; and he then will make his children princes in all the earth. This greatest of all kingdoms, bigger than the Babylonian, Grecian, or Roman, will be given to the saints of the Most High, who shall take it and possess it for ever and ever; then the saints will be kings, and rule over their oppressors. Making them pillars, is polishing them by grace, making them upright and ornamental in their profession; and where these things are found written by the Holy Spirit on the fleshy tables of the heart, the sum and substance of the New Testament, whether in the gospels or in the epistles of the apostles, are experienced in the souls of God's elect, which makes them the pillar and ground of the truth, known and read of all men, being made manifest in the consciences both of saints and sinners, hypocrites and heretics; and such living epistles have a seal upon them, as all epistles should have, having the broad seal of heaven on their souls, by which they become God's secret treasure, being sealed up to the day of redemption, which is redemption from the grave. These things are recorded by the Holy Trinity, and these things are written in the minds and hearts of all believers; and these inscriptions are as puzzling to the wise and prudent among us, as the hand-writing upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace was to the wise men of Babylon. But messengers who bear such tidings,
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and interpreters to explain them, are scarce.—*If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness, then he is gracious unto him.* Job xxxiii. 23. And I think that, if every congregated thousand in a profession in this nation had a real messenger to bring forth such good tidings, and endowed with divine skill to interpret them to sinners in whose hearts they are written, old England would be one of the happiest countries in all the world:

Dearly beloved, pardon me for the amazing length of this epistle; it was written, some late at night, and the rest early in the morning. When the waters are moved, and I can step in, I am (like Peter on the mount) apt to forget myself, but hope ever to remember thee at the throne; and he that hath such a friend must shew himself friendly.

Ever yours,

W. HUNTINGTON, S S.

LETTER IV.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lettes, Suffex.

Fellow Servant, and Fellow Soldier,

GRACE and peace be with thee, both in the armoury and in the field. *Counsel in the heart, faith the wise man (or rather Wisdom itself), is as deep waters; and the words of wisdom a flowing brook.* This witness is true; for before I had gotten the last out of hand I had two more in my heart; and therefore I must speak, or write, that I may be eased. I shewed, in my last, how each person in the glorious Trinity were jointly concerned in the salvation of God's elect; and treated a little of their co-operations in every branch of it. And this will further appear, even in the application of the promises.—*The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.* Eccl. xii. 11. In the masters of assemblies a plurality of persons appear; but in the one shepherd the unity of God is seen. If it be replied, that by the masters of assemblies the Jewish doctors are meant; I answer, they were not preachers of God's word; they made that of none effect by their own traditions. Nor can it mean the apostles or ordinary gospel-ministers, for they dare not take the

title of master : *Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ.* Matt. xxiii. 8. Nor is it in the power of any man to apply the word of God. To fasten the word of God, as a nail driven up to the head, requires power, and the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. If the most eloquent orator in the world, by the dint of elocution, was to attempt this work, and move the passions of men to the uttermost, all that can be said of it is, that they received it in word only : but, when the word comes with power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, the nail is fastened ; nor is it possible for either men or devils to draw it out. God the Father calls himself a master. *If I am, a master, where is my fiat ?* Mat. i. 6. *Call no man master, for one is your master, even Christ.* And so he that is taught of the Spirit sows to the Spirit, and is led by the Spirit ; he learns, obeys, and follows his master. Now these words of the wise, called goads, that prick, and nails, that hold fast, are given from one shepherd, even God : *The Lord is my shepherd, therefore I shall not want : for we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.*

Again—We are baptized in the name of all the three divine persons. *Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Matt. xxviii. 19. And, when we are baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, the love of God is shed abroad in the heart ; the sun of righteousness arises with healing in

his beams, and shines like the sun in his full strength; when the Holy Ghost brings the live coal from off the altar, or puts both life and love in the word, and lays it upon our tongue, telling us that our iniquity is taken away, and our sin purged, and that we must now confess it, and proclaim it. This baptism makes a minister a flaming fire, a burning and shining light; and unites poor souls to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and interests them in the love of all three. But, besides the baptism of the Holy Ghost, there is another that follows, and that is the fiery trial. We read of the spirit of judgment, and of the spirit of burning: for God keeps his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem, that his real churches may not be overrun with tares and chaff, straw and stubble. The vessels of gold and of silver will stand the furnace, but the vessels of wood and of earth will consume: the former, by losing their dross, appear the brighter and better for the fire; the latter, like a fool brayed in a mortar, ten times worse.

This blessed mystery ever was, and ever will be, with the chosen of God; for thus it is written: *According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, It is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come.* Haggai ii. 5, 6. Here is God the Father speaking and covenanting; and the essential Word, who is the covenant-

nant-head, and the covenant itself; because the covenant is with him, made with him, confirmed by him, and all the blessings of it are in him. The glorious proclamation of the name of the Lord is nothing else but the mercy and blessings of God in Christ Jesus, held forth in the covenant of grace: and this *my name*, says God, *is in him*—in the angel that went before them. Hence they are charged to obey him, and not to provoke him, *for he will not pardon your transgressions*. When Moses calls Christ the Rock, whose work is perfect; and sets him before them as their refuge, their life, and the length of their days; and tells them not to say in their heart, *Who shall ascend into heaven, or who shall descend into the deep?* to fetch the Word to them; these are all applied in the New Testament to Christ, and are the things of the new covenant, which the Spirit applies to the elect of God. Here is the Lord of Hosts speaking, and the Word (Christ) spoken of, and called *the desire of all nations*; and the covenant with him; and the Spirit remaining still among them: for, although national mercies were often taken away from Israel, and national calamities brought on, yet the elect were never deserted of their God.

Moreover, the Holy Trinity are to be considered in all our addresses or approaches to God: *For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father*. Here is the Father, to whom we find nearness and access, the surety having removed our sins and a broken law out of the way, and appearing

ing as our peace-maker and mediator, through whom we are indulged with this access; and here is one Spirit, under whose influence, as a spirit of grace and supplication, we draw nigh. This is the new and living way which Christ hath consecrated; and he tells us that no man can come to the Father but by him; and he that enters not by this new way and straight gate, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber; and such thieves and robbers are the Arians, Socinians, and Papists; the former of which allow of no mediator, and the latter have brought in a hundred.

This mystery, my dearly beloved, we must keep; hold fast, and abide in; which is so clearly revealed in the word of God. For, *if that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father; but the anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie: and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*

1 John ii. 24—27. Hence we may conclude that whosoever hath not the doctrine of Christ hath not God; but he that hath the doctrine of Christ, who receives the love of the truth, or the love of God, which is promised to us in the word of truth; and he that receives the truth in the love of it, believes in it, and holds it fast, confesseth it, and abides in it; even he shall continue in the Son, and in the Father; and likewise he shall continue in the anointing, which is truth, and is no lie. But I must break off, and go to our gates, where there are things

things new and old, which are laid up for the king's beloved, that a portion of meat in due season may be given to the household. Adieu.

Yours in him,

W. HUNTINGTON, S.S.

LETTER V,

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

Beloved in the Lord,

Yours came to hand; and I am glad that the subject meets with your approbation, as my mind is still employed in this glorious mystery. I concluded my last with our abiding in the Son and in the Father; and likewise in the anointing, which is true, and is no lie. And shall proceed, and begin this with the apostolic benediction: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us*, is of the same import. Now from all these plain passages of scripture, which I have quoted, three divine persons appear in the one God, and no more; not one can be left out, nor can one be added.

But

But the adversaries to the Trinity object, because the express word *Trinity* is not mentioned in the Bible: but it is not the word that they hate and fight against, but the doctrine. We know that two is a couple, or a pair; three is a trinity; and four a quaternity: and *there are three that bear record in heaven*, and no more, and *these three are one*: not three names and one person, but three distinct persons in one undivided essence. So likewise they object to the word *satisfaction* by the sacrifice of Christ; because the express word is not mentiond. But the thing is to be found in the Bible. God is called a creditor, (Luke vii. 41) and poor sinners are debtors, to fulfil the whole law, on pain of eternal death; and *he that offends in one point is guilty of all*; and, should he die in this state, into the prison of hell he must go; for, if we die in our sins, where Christ is we cannot come; and therefore cannot come out of prison till the very last mite is paid; and, as lying in jail cannot pay debts, there can be no hope of a jail-delivery. Exposed to this, and threatened with it, are all men while in their sins. In this state Christ found us when *he took our nature, and was made of a woman, and made under the law*; which law he obeyed, and his obedience is placed to our account for righteousness; *our sins he took, and bore them in his own body on the tree, and was made a curse for us, and died in our room; the just for the unjust, and so redeemed us from the curse, and thus fulfilled all righteousness*, with which our creditor is well-pleased; and

and by the blood of his covenant he sends forth his elect prisoners out of the pit, declaring himself faithful and just in forgiving our sins, and in cleansing us from all unrighteousness. And this is real satisfaction made for sin, for the creditor is well-pleased with it; and to be well-pleased with the payment is to be satisfied with it. And, as these things are sound, we hold the words which well express them; and it pleases God, by the foolishness of preaching these things, to save all those who believe in them. And, on the other hand, we find many things advanced by those who are opposite to us, which sound as bad in our ears as the words *person*, *trinity*, and *satisfaction*, do in theirs. Some tell us that Christ was only an instrument in the creation, or a creating instrument. Nothing can sound worse in the ears of a true lover of Christ than this; it is not common sense. We know that instruments are used by mechanics and builders, to fit and prepare materials for the purpose the artist or builder intends them: but to tell a man that such a mechanic has finished such a curious machine, and such a building is erected, to be the property of the tools that were used in the work, and for the praise and glory of them, would appear madness. So to talk of a creating instrument, or an instrument possessing creating power to make all things out of nothing, are such things as no man in his senses can believe. *For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions,*

things, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him, and for him : and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. Col. i. 16, 17. He is here declared to be before all things; and of course long before this creating instrument could be invented, or brought forth. *All things were created by him, and for him ; created by his own power, and for his own glory and use : and by him all things consist, or are preserved in their existence.* Now this glorious Creator cannot be an instrument, but he must be God : and to this the Father bears witness—*But unto the Son be suit, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom : thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity ; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment ; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed : but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.* Heb. i. 8, 9. In the above words God the Father calls the divine Creator of heaven and earth, God and Lord ; and tells us, that the heavens are the work of his hands : and he must be the best judge of his own Son. They tell us that Christ had a human soul pre-existing from eternity, and that it was with this that God took counsel, and by this he made the world. But *Christ is before all things*, which this thing cannot be ;
much

much less can it be called *the fellow of the Lord of Hosts*. and surely it must be robbery with a witness, for such a thing as this to make itself *equal with God*, as Christ did, even when *he made himself of no reputation, but took on him the form of a servant*. Philip. ii. 6. Some talk of Christ's being a delegated power, and a subordinate God, and a God by office; but this is making more gods than one: for, if one be supreme and the other subordinate, there must be two; different in essence, glory, power, and majesty. And to worship with divine adoration any thing below infinite divinity, is rank idolatry. However, this vain-imagined distinction between the Father and Son hath no place in the Bible. The Lord of Hosts calls Christ his fellow. Zech. xiii. 7. And Christ thought it no robbery to be equal with God the Father. Phil. ii. 6. Christ says, *I and my Father are one*. And *all men must honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*. And, if he is truly and properly God, equal to the Father, and one with him, and always in him, then there can be no idolatry in worshipping him; for all the angels of God are commanded to worship the first-born, even in his state of incarnation; as they all did at his birth. Heb. i. 6. And Zion is commanded to do the same; and the true reason given for this command is, because he is God: *He is thy Jehovah, and worship thou him*. Psalm xlv. 11. And we know that *the Lord our God is one Lord*. Deut. vi. 4. And we must have no other gods but him: *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy*

thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Matt. iv. 10. And he that obeys this first and great commandment must banish far from his mind all the spurious deities of the Arians and Socinians, for these are no better than the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Many such strange notions as these does Satan beget in the vain imaginations of men; and such are inventors of evil things, and set up the stumbling block of their iniquity in their heart; and God takes them in their own craftiness, by suffering them to pay adoration to that which is not God; which is idolatry, and an image of jealousy: which the pure gospel, if ever it had been attended with power to their hearts, would have pulled down. *For the weapons of our warfare are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. And sure I am that those who deny the eternity of Christ, and talk of a human soul pre-existing, talk nonsense. No human soul can be God's fellow, nor God's equal, nor one with him, nor one in him; much less can such a creature, which is inferior to an angel, be the only-begotten Son of God, or the Son of the Father in truth and love. But, as for Christ, *all things were made by him, and he is before all things.* Col. i. 16, 17. And, if he is before all things, then he must be before this human soul was made; and, if all things were

were made by him, then he must make this soul also, and of course make himself. But this phantom is not the Christ of God; this is not God's mystery among the Gentiles, which he is pleased to reveal in us, the hope of glory. We are not to hope in a creature, but to set our hope in God. Christ is the faithful and true witness, and the record that he bears of himself is true; and this is the record that he bears of himself: *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come; the ALMIGHTY.* Rev. i. 8.

The enemies to the glorious mystery of the Trinity hold a trinity as well as we; they allow that there are three in God; so that if we err in this matter, so do they; only they allow of three names, and but one person; nor are they agreed which is the person: some Sabellians hold Christ to be the person, and the Father and the Spirit to be only names; some, that are called Arians and Socinians, say the Father is the person, and the Son and Spirit are only names: thus one denies the Father, and the other denies the Son; and between these two they have no God.

This, however, must be true, that whatsoever the Father is, the Son must be the same; and so the Jews understood the Saviour's confession of his own sonship, and laid this thing to his charge, namely, that he made himself equal with God. *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God: which the*

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Saviour

Saviour never denied, but confirmed. *The Son can do nothing of himself, (and how can he, when the Father and he are one?) but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.* John v. 19. Hence it is plain, that the Son is equal with the Father; and, if so, then he must be of the same nature with him. So that, if the Son be a son only in name, the Father must be the same; if Christ be only a son in office, or in a figurative sense, the Father must be so too; and, if Christ be no more than a human soul, which is but a mere creature, the Father must be such also. For Christ is declared to be *the only-begotten Son of God.* John iii. 16. Begotten, and not created. Nor is he a son by office, as magistrates are; nor by creation, as angels and men are: but *the Son of the Father in truth and love.* 2 John 3. Therefore, whatever the Son is, such is the Father; for Christ is the Son of the Father in truth and love: and, as the Father is God, such is Christ; *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.* Heb. i. 3. *The true God, and eternal life.* 1 John iii. 20. And, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.* 1 Tim. iii. 16. And, were all the Arians and Socinians in the world to combine together, they never could apply the above, nor the following ascriptions, to a human soul, or to any mere creature, however exalted or dignified. *Keep this*

this commandment without spot, unstreakable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15, 16. Let all the enemies of the Son of God prove that an empty name, or a pre-existing human soul, or a demi-god, or a god by office, or a creating instrument, or a subordinate god; let them, I say, choose out of this list of imaginary deities which they please, and let them prove that the apostle's ascriptions are applicable to their feigned gods, namely, that their pre-existing human soul is *the blessed and only Potentate*; that this creature is *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*; that this human soul hath *only immortality*; that it *dwells in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see*; and that *honour and power everlasting, Amen*, is to be ascribed to that. *He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? Isaiah xlv. 20.*

Nor did the incarnation of Christ bring a fourth person into the Trinity. The human nature of Christ is not a person; it is called *a new thing*, Jer. xxxi. 22, and *a body thing*, Luke i. 35, but not a person; for the human nature of Christ never had personal subsistence, or it never did personally exist alone or

of itself, but it subsisted in union with the divine person of the Son of God; and this union took place before the human nature was prepared or formed—*the Word was made flesh.*

Some tell us that Christ took on him a "human form" from everlasting; but how he could assume a human form when there were no human beings is what I cannot conceive; there can be no form of a thing that never existed, any more than the sun could have a shadow from everlasting when the sun had no being. I read that *Christ was found in the form of God, and that he thought it no robbery to be equal with God.* And this form does not mean any outward shape; for *who hath heard God's voice, or seen his shape?* But it means that he possessed, in the highest degree, all divine perfections which are peculiar to the divine being; *being the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.* What has led some poor, blind, presumptuous souls into this mistake is, the Saviour's being seen by Abraham and by Joshua in a human appearance; and by the same rule they might prove that he assumed the nature and form of angels from everlasting; for he appeared to Moses, to Jacob, and to Manoah, as an angel of God. But the truth is, Christ is neither an angel nor a man; not an angel, because he is the creator of angels—*He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flaming fire;* nor a man, for as such he never had personal subsistence or existence.

But

- But they tell us that the human soul of Christ, and the form of a human body which Christ took from everlasting, and which they call "the glory man," and in which he appeared to the ancient patriarchs, was part of our nature; so that, when he became incarnate, he took only a human body, not a reasonable soul; which they prove from these words—*For verily he took not on him the nature of angels.* "Human souls," they say, "are angelic; " but he took not on him the nature of angels." But, if this can be any proof, we shall not know what the scriptures mean by things; there is a distinction between *an innumerable company of angels,* and *the spirits of just men made perfect.* Nor are the souls of men ever called angels, though ministers of the gospel are; but even this respects their office, not their nature; for both angels and preachers are ministers to the heirs of salvation: but preachers are only angels by office, not by nature. Nor can it be proved from the words of Christ, when he says, *They neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven;* for this only respects their glorified state: and the words were intended to confound the Sadducees, who asked, *Whose wife of the seven the woman should be in the resurrection?* The Saviour informs them that marriage is peculiar to this life, and for the procreation of children; but in the world to come there would be no more of this than there is among the angels. Otherwise there will be a great deal of difference between an-

gels and saints; the former being the Lord's servants, the latter the Lord's wife—*Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name*; but this never was said of angels.

One would wonder (were it not for the power and dominion that the devil has over mankind) how any man dare to assert such things in plain contradiction to the word of God. For, if this human bodily form and the human soul of Christ were from eternity, and nothing taken at his incarnation but the body, how can this scripture be true—*Wherefore, in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren* (Heb. ii. 17), when there was none of his brethren ever made like unto him? And, if this behoved him, if it was meet and fit it should be so, it ill becomes men to make such a difference. Nor could Adam be *a figure of him that was to come*; for Adam came not into being this way. Adam, Christ's figure, was made body and soul at once, and all Christ's brethren come into the world with a body and a soul; and they are all born under the law and under the curse of it, being by this natural birth children of wrath even as others; and the heaviest sentence of the law is levelled at the soul—the *soul that sins shall die*. Now Christ, as our surety, must be made like unto his brethren; and so he was; he was *made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law*, by making his soul an offering for sin; and then he was to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. But,
if

if his human soul existed from eternity, it was not made under the law, and therefore could not be subjected, by virtue of his suretyship engagements, to endure the wrath and curse of God for us. They that suffer the law, whether they suffer as surety or as debtors, must be made under the law, and be subject to the law. Men have bodies and souls, and both are under the law, and both have sinned. And he that redeems them must be of the same nature with them, and near of kin to them, or the former institution of God will not admit of it. He that redeems must be a *brother*, or one *near of kin*. Lev. xxv. 48, 49. Christ is both *brother* and *goal*; but a human body is neither a brother nor a kinsman, it is only half a brother, and the worst half; yea, a dead brother, *for the body without the spirit is dead*. James ii. 26. The truth is, Christ took not on him the nature of angels to redeem fallen angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham, the whole human nature, body and soul; and this is plain by the growth of both; for *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*, Luke ii. 52. His soul grew in wisdom, and his body grew in stature; but, if his soul had existed from all eternity, his wisdom and understanding must have been mature and fully ripe before the world began, and therefore incapable of such a growth.

O, my brother, my pen has run on at a strange rate; double letters, I fear, will bring thee to poverty, unless thy faith increaseth more than it has hitherto done.

I received yours, and thank you for it; and shall still entreat thee to find fault where you see cause, and you will much oblige your affectionate friend and brother in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER VII.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the New Vicarage,
near the Deanery, Lewes, Sussex.*

Companion in travail,

By the contents of your last I perceive that your fits of incredulity are returned upon you. I was in hopes that you had been in a great measure recovered from this disease; but epidemical disorders are not easily eradicated. "In the ministry you are lifeless, in bodily sickness just ready for the grave, and in circumstances almost a bankrupt." you must think me one of Solomon's simple ones, indeed, if I can believe all this, when you do not believe one word of it yourself. I shall go on with my former subject, and not suffer the devil to employ

ploy all my time in disproving what he himself knows to be lies of his own inventing.

The damnable heresy of denying the divinity of our Lord and Saviour seems to me to render him of no use in any one of his office characters; it renders, also, his great undertaking and his finished work neither meritorious nor efficacious; for no mere creature can merit for himself, much less for another. His divine nature stamps infinite dignity on all his office characters, and so it does on all his mighty works.

His kingly office stands on this—*But unto the Son be saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.* Which kingdom stands in power, and is always called the kingdom of God. *His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace; of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.* Isa. ix. 6, 7. Hence he is called King of Zion, and King of glory.

The merit and dignity of his priestly office proceeds on the same footing. How could any mere man's dying atone for all the transgressions that were committed under the first testament, and all the sins of God's elect under the second? Inasmuch as those that are called do receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

ritance. Heb. ix. 15. Hence it is asserted that by his one offering he hath perfected for ever all them that are sanctified. The dignity of his office and the merits of his oblation spring from his divine sonship. For the law maketh men high-priests which have infirmities; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore. Heb. vii. 28.

His prophetic office, and the perfection of it, proceeds on the foundation of his proper deity. *The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Sair unto them; he joined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people: all his saints are in thy hand, and they shall sit down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3.* At this divine prophet's feet did Mary sit, and receive of his word, when Martha was cumbered with much serving. And in allusion to this text is Mary commended, and is said to choose the good part, which shall not be taken from her. She was a disciple that was brought up at the Lord's feet; and, as all God's children are taught of the Lord, Mary was one of this family, who could never be deprived either of the word of life which she received, nor yet of her adoption into God's family; she was an heir of promise, and a child of God. And who but the only-begotten Son could reveal and make known God's counsel and covenant, his good-will of purpose and of promise; his tender

tender mercy, loving-kindness, pity, and compassion, which were but dimly known under the former dispensation? And that *God is love* (1 John iv. 8), was not known, at least not recorded, under the first testament. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Matt. xi. 27.

- His office of mediator could stand us in no stead if he were not *Immanuel, God with us*. The breach opened by sin between God and man was infinite, as the scriptures witness—*Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquities infinite?* Job xiii. 5. Our sin had separated between us and our God. Moses, indeed, was at times allowed to stand in the gap; but it was by virtue of his office, in which he personated the Saviour, that he was suffered to mediate there; and, though at times he prevailed to lengthen out Israel's tranquillity, yet judgment always overtook them at last. *I have pardoned according to thy word. But they have tempted me now these ten times, surely they shall not see the land.* Numb. xiv. 20, 22. No prayer of Moses, Noah, Daniel, or Job, will purge our sins, magnify the law, or satisfy divine justice. He that stands in this breach, and lays his hand upon both, must be God's *equal*, Phil. ii. 6, and man's *fellow*, Psalm xlv. 7; or else mercy and truth will never meet together, nor will righteousness and peace kiss each other. But Christ
was

was the mighty God when a child born, and the Prince of life when crucified; Acts iii. 15; the Holy One, who saw no corruption, when in the tomb, Psalm xvi. 10. *It was truth that sprung out of the earth at his resurrection, when righteousness looked down from heaven well-pleased.* Psalm lxxxv. 11. *He was God manifest in the flesh when he was received up into glory.* 1 Tim. iii. 16. *And the Lord of hosts and King of glory when he entered there.* Psalm xxiv. 9, 10. And we can have no better proof of all this than by seeing poor prisoners come forth out of the pit in which is no water, by the blood of his covenant. Zech. ix. 11.

And sure I am that his being our Advocate with the Father, if he be no more than a creature, would never be sufficient to silence law and justice, Satan and conscience; but, as he is *the wonderful Counsellor, and the mighty God*, he can do it; and, blessed be his precious name, we know that he has done it, and will do it.

His endearing character of a Husband is founded on the same divine basis—*Thy Maker is thy husband; the Lord of hosts is his name, the God of the whole earth shall he be called.*

His character of a Father stands on the same bottom—*The second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven*; hence called the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.

And that of a Saviour must needs stand on the same footing—*God has laid help upon one that is mighty;*

mighty. For how can a creature save? Vain is the help of man. Psal. cviii. 12. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The Lord thy God, in the midst of thee, is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. Zeph. iii. 16, 17.

The efficacy of his blood springs from the same divine source; for, though he was put to death only in the flesh, yet his human nature suffered in union with his divine person. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Acts xx. 28.

The efficacy and excellency of his everlasting righteousness takes its divinity and dignity from hence—*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man: and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. ii. 6—8.* From hence springs the glory and efficacy of his obedience; and by the obedience of [this] one shall many be made righteous; yea, in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory; for he has brought in an everlasting righteousness, which takes its name from the Saviour's divine nature. *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for therein is*

the righteousness of God revealed, from faith to faith. And this is the name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness.

As Head over all things to the church, what comfort could flow to it from the consideration of Christ's being a mere man? She is exposed to thousands of inveterate adversaries, ghostly and bodily; and continually floating upon the waves and billows of trouble and distress, and deemed as the filth and out-couring of all things, and treated accordingly: while Christ, the Head, is ascended far above all heavens, and of course at an infinite distance from his well-beloved, if he be no more than man. No comfort can flow to her but from his immensity and omnipresence—*Behold, I am with you always to the world's end*; which, as man, abstractedly considered, he cannot be.

As a Physician, who is God's way upon earth, and his *saving health among all nations*. Psal. lxxvii. 2. Who bore our sins and took our infirmities, and who binds up the broken-hearted and restores health to us; which cannot be done but by purging us from all our guilt and filth, idols and dead works, false notions of God and a dead form of godliness: the comfort of all which springs from his being God. *If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes; I will put none of those diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians:*

*for I am the Lord that healeth thee. Exodus iv.
26.*

As the Covenant Head—*Thou speakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. Also, I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed, also, will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. Psalm lxxix.* Which covenant is a covenant of royalty; the Lord is king, and the elect are subjects. A covenant of wedlock, in which the Lord of hosts is the husband, and the elect the wife; and he betroths them unto him for ever—*Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. Hosea ii. 19, 20.* It is a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, in which the Son of God is high-priest, and God the Holy Ghost is his anointing and consecration; and he is ordained by God the Father to this office for his elect, to make an atonement for them, to perfect them, and to intercede for them, till they are all brought, in a state of holiness and happiness, *into the holy of holies, eternal in the heavens,* where our high-priest is for us entered. The comfort of all which springs from his being, not as Moses, who was a faithful servant; but from Christ being a son over his own house, whose house are we;
and

and the son over this his own house is God. *For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.* Heb. iii. iv.

As an object of trust and confidence—no consolation can arise to us from his being no more than a creature; so far from it, that it is dangerous to the last degree to trust in him as such. *For thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man; and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord: for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land not inhabited.* Jer. xviii. 5, 6. This is the woful case and state of all those who deny the godhead of Christ, and yet trust in him as no more than man. But there is no curse upon them that trust in the only-begotten Son of God. *I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Psal. ii. Here is no curse to them that trust in the Son of God and King of Zion, but an eternal blessing; and no blessing can be upon those that trust in Christ if he be not God; but he is truly and properly God, and therefore those that trust in him are doubly blessed.

Blessed

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh; but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. Jer. xvii. 7, 8.

As the object of the saints love.—*He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, more than me, is not worthy of me. And adds, If any man come unto me, and hateth not his father and mother, and even his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Surely, if Christ be not God, he hath zealously affected us, but not well; for we are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, mind, and strength. And, as Christ demands this love of all the saints, he must be God; and so he is; and therefore we can never love him enough. And those who dearly love the Son of God, God the Father is well pleased with—He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. John xiv. 21. And he adds, The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. John xvi. 27.*

As an object of prayer.—Almost every recipient of a bodily cure and of special grace, in the days of his flesh, prayed to him before they obtained either; and prayer is a branch of divine worship: yea, they worshipped him with divine adoration, as the

lame leper that was healed, who returned to give
 glory to God; the woman with her bloody issue
 also, and the Syrophenician woman; yes, and all
 the apostles, also, on the mount of Olives, when
 he was taken from them up into heaven, worshipped
 him as he went up. And all the heavenly host wor-
 shipped the First-born when he was brought into the
 world; and Stephen, that evangelical deacon,
 breathed out the following petition to him with his
 expiring breath.—*And they stoned Stephen, calling
 upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.
 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice,
 Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he
 had said this he fell asleep.* Acts vii. 59, 60. But
 we need not wonder at Stephen putting up his last
 prayer to Christ; Stephen knew him, and had the
 Spirit of supplication in him; and the Spirit always
 testifies of Christ, and glorifies him also—*He shall
 glorify me.* And, besides, Stephen had a view of
 the Saviour; he saw *the heavens open, and Jesus
 standing at the right hand of God.* And we know
 that, if Christ be not God, he could not be admitted
 to the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb. i. 3.
 Hence it is plain that all who debase the Saviour to
 the level of a mere creature are ignorant of him;
 they have never known him nor seen him. But all
 believers do see him, though not in that miraculous
 manner Stephen did. *Yet a little while and the world
 hath me no more; but ye see me: and because I live ye
 shall live also.* John xiv. 19.

As

As a foundation.—What security could a perishing sinner expect by venturing his eternal all upon any thing less than God? A human arm, and all human works, are but a sandy foundation, which must give way when the fiery trial, the dying hour, and the day of judgment come to try it. But Christ is an elect, precious, tried stone, and a sure foundation; but not as a mere man—*For who is God, save the Lord? And who is a rock, save our God?* 2 Sam. xxii. 32. He that ventures here is safe, for the gates of hell shall never prevail, either against the foundation or the superstructure. *Whoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, is like unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and when the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.* Matt. vii. 24, 25. In all this, my dearly-beloved brother, I have endeavoured, as far as God hath enabled me, to cast up the high way, in opposition to them who obscure and destroy the way of our paths: But we have the promise that some shall be raised up and be enlightened, and shall be called healers of the breach, and restorers of paths to dwell in; and these are the good old paths which the just are to inquire after, and to walk in, and in which they are to find rest for their souls. Jer. vi. 16. For never surely was there more opposition made to the divinity of the Son of God, and to the power of the Holy Ghost, than in the present day. *But, if the foundations be destroyed, what*

shall the righteous do? The wicked can rejoice in Zion's calamity—Rase it, Rase it, even to the foundation thereof. But what shall the righteous do? Christ is the Lord our righteousness; and *he is the rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.* Deut. xxxii. 4. To remove these foundations is to strip Zion both of her ornaments and bulwarks, and to leave her as *a cottage in a vineyard, or as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.* Isa. i. 8.

A most daring, bold, presumptuous man, not long since, had the effrontery to declare in public, "that Christ was no more God than he was; so far" (said he) from his being God, he did not know "the time of Jerusalem's destruction." Alluding to the following passage, which he thought was a full proof of it—*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.* Mark xiii. 32. We know that the human nature of Christ is not omniscient: as man he grew in wisdom and in stature. I wonder this poor child of Satan did not go a little further, and prove him to be blind also; the scriptures would have borne him out according to the light which is in him, for his light is darkness. *Who is blind but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant? Seeing many things, but thou observeest not: opening the ears, but he heareth not.* The Lord

Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake ; he will magnify the law and make it honourable. Isaiah xlii. 19—21. Though men might call him blind, yet he was perfect, and seeing many things. Who is deaf as my messenger ? opening the ears, but thou hearest not. Though he was blind yet he saw many things ; and, though he was deaf, yet he opened the ears of others. And one of the many things, which the Lord's perfect messenger saw, was the day of Jerusalem's destruction ; and this he declared eight or nine hundred years before it came to pass. *I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me. For I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.* Isa. lxiii. 3, 4. The day of vengeance, that was in his heart, was the day of Jerusalem's destruction—*Let not them that are in the countries enter into the city ; for these be the days of vengeance.* Luke xxi. 22. The year of his redeemed was not the year in which Christ died, when he redeemed his elect from death and hell ; but the time of the saints' redemption from Jewish persecution—*And, when ye see these things come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.* Luke xxi. 28. Christ redeems his people from the deceit and violence of men, as well as from the wrath of God ; *and precious shall their blood be in his sight.* Psal. lxxii. 14. And

so the Jews found it when all the righteous blood shed, from the blood of Abel to Zacharias, was required of that generation.

The going forth of the commandment to build Jerusalem, and from that time to the coming of Messiah the Prince, and to the cutting off the Messiah; and the people of the Roman prince that was to come to Jerusalem to destroy the city and the sanctuary; together with the seven years' peace with many nations, which the Romans were to make during the time of their war with the Jews, till God's decreed indignation was poured out upon the desolate; were all foretold by the angel Gabriel to Daniel, Dan. ix. 25—28. And the whole of this matter was made known to Gabriel by a man clothed in linen, which was no other than the High-priest of our profession. *And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.* Dan. viii. 16. Hence it appears that, though he knew not that woful day as man, yet he knew it as God, and highly resented their cruel treatment of him, and their blasphemy against his Holy Spirit; for it was Christ that executed that fearful judgment upon them, God having committed all judgment to the Son, and all power in heaven and on earth. And he displayed it with a witness, as he foretold them he would—*Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me.*

But

But thou, O Lord, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them. Psalm xli. 9. 10. And he did requite them: for it was he that mustered the Roman army, and brought it against them: and the appearance of that was *the sign of the Son of man in heaven; when all the tribes of the earth were to mourn.* Matt. xxiv. 30. The Jews had long required of him a sign from heaven, and he gave them one. The destruction and desolation of the Jews was not to come till Messiah was cut off; and their ruin and destruction was a sure sign that Jesus was the Messiah; and, though the blind Jews could not see it, the children of light did.

These, my dearly-beloved brother, are the men that labour at Zion's foundation, which to them is a stumbling-stone and a rock of offence; and too often do they prevail, till the foundations are almost hid, and then God raises up others to bring them forth again. *And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, the Repairer of the breach, the Restorer of paths to dwell in.* Isa. lviii. 12. Thus some bring to light, and some bury; some pull down, and some build up. *He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.*

True, yoke-fellow, adieu. Grace and peace be multiplied. So prays

Yours in the path of tribulation,

W. HUNTINGTON, S.S.

LETTER VIII.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the new Vicarage,
Lewes, Sussex.*

*Dearly-beloved and longed-for, my joy, and the crown
of my rejoicing !*

I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper in thy labours, and be in health for the work, knowing that hard labour and a frail tabernacle make us move heavily ; but our God has promised that, as our day so shall our strength be. I shall now resume my former subject, as I find you are by no means weary of it. And what I purpose to send to my dear brother is something of the unctuous experience which believers have of the glorious mystery that I have been writing about. I shewed you in a former epistle that if ever our hearts were comforted, if they were ever knit together in love, and if ever we come to the full assurance of understanding, it must be by an humble *acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.* Col. ii. 2, 3. This mystery is not only to be acknowledged or assented to as a revealed truth, but it is to be embraced by faith, and

and to be held, and held fast; as many violent and unwearied attacks, both by devils and heretics, will be made against it; and, if we are unsound or unsettled in the ground-work or foundation, all the rest will be out of order. The building cannot be fitly framed, according to the account of a wise master-builder, unless the glorious proprietor of the building be savingly known; for it is a mystical building; founded in faith, and cemented together in love, and grows up in wisdom, knowledge, and power, not by human might, nor by the power of free-will, *but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.* Take the apostle's account—*Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.* Eph. ii. 19—22. The apostle tells us that the living stones, the choice materials of this building, are God's household, freeborn citizens; and that Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone that unites all saints, Jews and Gentiles, antediluvian and postdiluvian saints, together; and that the building grows up into an holy temple in the Lord, an habitation of God through the Spirit. If God the Son be left out of our faith, there is no foundation; and if God the Father, or the Holy Spirit, be left out, where is the inhabitant? It is *an habitation*

bitation of God through the Spirit. Christ is the nearest object to faith, as our Mediator. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me; for through Christ we believe in God, who raised him from the dead.* 1 Peter i. 21. And we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith: Here is the mystery; faith lays hold of Jesus Christ, and through him we believe in God the Father, and, upon our believing we receive the Spirit through faith, and are sealed by him. This is the ground-work, the basis, and power, on which faith stands or rests; all building is in vain without this. *Building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.* Jude 20, 21. The most Holy Trinity is the mystery on which faith rests; and we stand by faith, or rest on the powerful confidence which the arm of God reveals in us. Hence the exhortation, *Hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.* 1 Tim. iii. 9. This is called building up ourselves on our most holy faith. Faith is the Father's gift to us through Christ, and from his fulness it comes, and by the operation of the Spirit it is wrought in us, and therefore called a fruit of the Spirit; this is the basis, namely, the Holy Trinity. Love is the bond of union, or the grand cement that compacts and builds up; charity edifieth, or raises the edifice. Hence we read of the love of God to us, in giving the Son; and the love of the Son, in laying down his life for us; and the love of the Holy Ghost also. *Now I beseech you, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake*

fake and for the love of the Spirit. Rom. xv. 30. The love of the Trinity to us is the bond of union, which, when perceived by faith, and enjoyed, leads to a most blessed freedom and familiarity with the Father, Son, and Spirit; as you read, And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery. Eph. iii. 9. We can have fellowship with nothing but persons; there is no fellowship with names. Those things have I written unto you, that you may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John i. 3. And you read of the comfort of love, and of the fellowship of the Spirit. Phil. ii. 1. Hence the foundation of vital godliness is God—Father, Son, and Spirit. Faith apprehends this, and by a full persuasion stays the mind thereon; love is the cementing bond that unites the soul to God. He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him; that is, he abideth in the Trinity; he abideth in the Son, and in the Father. And it is added, As that anointing hath taught you, you shall abide in him. Read 1 John ii. 27. Here is our inbeing and abiding in the Father, Son, and Spirit; and fellowship is the effect of this union.

True fellowship among men is a company of real friends meeting together in love. God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. And the Holy Ghost applies the word of reconciliation. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called

called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. John xv. 15.

Persons in fellowship often meet and associate together. Believers, with their confessions, prayers, praises, and thank-offerings, pay their constant visits to their God: and in their conclusive doxologies address all the three divine persons distinctly; and by these we ascend, in faith and affection, to the Almighty. And, with respect to the sensible enjoyment of God's presence, the Holy Trinity often condescends to visit us. *If a man love me he will keep my words ; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* John xiv. 23. And the Holy Ghost comes also—*I will send you a Comforter, who shall abide with you for ever.* Thus does the holy and blessed Trinity visit and take up their abode with believing souls.

Persons in real union and fellowship are a comfort to each other, and partake of each other's joys. *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* John xiv. 16. Christ does not say, " I myself will pray to myself, that I may send myself ;" which would have been the right way of expressing the matter, if there were but one person in the Trinity : but " I will pray the Father." Here is Christ upon earth praying ; the Father in heaven prayed unto ; and another Comforter, distinct from them both, prayed for. The Father comforts us by revealing his dear Son in us, and by accepting us in the beloved, and appearing well-

well-pleased with us in his righteousness. *And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee : though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.* Isai. xii. 1. The Saviour comforts us by speaking the word of eternal life to our hearts. *My word is spirit, and my word is life. My sheep hear my voice, and follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.* John x. 27, 28. *This is my comfort in my affliction ; for thy word hath quickened me.* Psalm cxix. 50. The Holy Spirit comforts us, by applying the promises to us, and attending them with power ; the word comes with power in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance ; which power brings peace, joy, and gladness of heart ; which is called the sincere milk of the word ; and so it is written, *Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her ; rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her ; that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations ; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream ; then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you ; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.* Isai. lxvi. 10—12. This joy, consolation, love, and peace, are in the New Testament called *the fruits of the Spirit.* Gal. v. 22.

Persons

Persons in true fellowship have great confidence in each other, and know much of each other's minds; and so it is with God and his saints. In the saints' worst hours they believe without doubting the truth of God, and the truth of the whole of his word; whether they can take the comfort of it or not, they know it is true, and that God, the author of it, is true; and, as God is true, so he makes his children sound in the truth, lovers of it, and earnest contenders for it, and sworn enemies to all false doctrines. *For he said, Surely they are my people; children that will not lie; so he was their saviour.* Isai. lxiii. 8. They know much of each other's minds; and so it is with God and his elect: they are made acquainted with God the Father's secret purposes of grace, of his counsels and his covenant, of his good will of purpose and of promise in Christ Jesus before the world began. Christ chooses us out of the world, and discovers himself to us, with all his finished work and saving benefits; while the Holy Spirit takes of the things that are his, and shews them to us, and makes them manifest in our hearts, and secretly seals us up to the day of redemption.

Persons in fellowship often feast and banquet together. The Father makes us *a feast of fat things, of marrow and fatness, and of wines on the lees well refined.* Isai. xxv. 6. Which glorious feast is the offering up of Christ (in sacrifice) once for us all. This is bringing forth the fatted calf to entertain the returning prodigals. Wisdom says, *She hath killed her beasts,*

beasts, she bath mingled her wine, she bath furnished her table. Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Prov. ix. 2, 5. And no sooner does the poor perishing sinner's mind and conscience feast upon his sin-atoning blood and life-giving flesh, but the fire of inbred lusts, the fiery wrath of a broken law, and the fiery darts of Satan, are all quenched and dispersed, while the Holy Spirit and his grace flow in, and overshadow the soul with the discovery of Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness. I sat down under his shadow with great delight; and his fruit was sweet to my taste. Song ii. 3. And, as the Almighty banquets us, so does he feast and feed upon the satisfaction Christ made for sin, and upon the fruits of his own implanted grace. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry. Luke xv. 22, 23. And the Saviour says, I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drank my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. Song v. 1. Nor is the Holy Spirit less entertained, when we are lively under his influence, observant of his instructions, and obedient to his dictates; as appears by the approbation that he gives, the witness that he bears to our hearts, and by filling us with more of his grace, while we are blessing him for what we have got.

When

When the apostles were apprehended and taken before the council of the Jews, and threatened and charged to teach no more in the name of Jesus, the Spirit of God enabled them to speak with such fortitude that the council marvelled; and, when they joined their own company, and put up their united prayers, the Holy Spirit shook the very house, and filled them all again. *And when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with boldness.* Acts iv. 31. For, as the Spirit is said to be grieved by the sins of some men, and to be vexed and rebelled against by others, so he rejoices in some, approves of others, and fortifies them to the astonishment of their most inveterate persecutors. Philip, when he obeyed the Spirit's voice, and joined himself to the Ethiopian's chariot, and preached Jesus to him *was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was found at Azotus,* Acts viii. 39, 40. He fortified, furnished, and emboldened Paul before the Roman governor, that Felix trembled when Paul stood undaunted. He made Stephen's face shine like the face of an angel, when his persecutors gnashed their teeth with anguish and desperation; and made Paul and Silas sing the high praises of God in the prison at midnight; and sent an earthquake and shook the prison to the foundation thereof, and opened the doors of it, and made the chains fall from off the criminals, to let them know that he proclaims liberty to captives—*For where*
the

the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; and this the poor jailor found soon after, to his astonishment. In all these things it is easy to see how the Holy Spirit is entertained, pleased, and delighted, when men obey his dictates, and give themselves up to be led by him.

Persons in fellowship are jointly engaged: so God and his people are engaged in one cause, and jointly concerned in one interest. God is the portion of his people, and Jacob is the lot of God's inheritance. He that toucheth the saints toucheth the apple of God's eye; and the saints hate them that hate God, and count them their enemies: they love them that love the Lord; and, when any professors turn their backs and forsake God, as Judas did, the real saints always forsake them. God's own glory, in all his works, is what he aims at; and in the defence of God's glory and honour are his people engaged. God seeks a quarrel with the Philistines, and Samson will fight it out if he die in the field. God will avenge his people on the Egyptians, and Moses engages the whole nation. The wicked Jews judged and condemned the Son of God, and the apostles got upon twelve thrones to judge and condemn them; and, when they had passed the sentence upon them, the Lord executed it. *But, when they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.* Matt. x. 23. The world, the flesh, and the devil, are God's enemies; and against

these do the saints cry, pray, and fight, all their days; and, if they are foiled or overcome, it is called violence, captivity, or a rape, which God will highly resent; and, if they are pressed beyond measure, and despair even of life, and are thrown seven times, and complain, *I die daily, or for thy sake we are killed all the day long*; yet they up and at it again, and never give over, nor give up, till they die; for *as he is, so are we in this world.* 1 John iv. 17. *God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that we might live through him: and Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.* And the Spirit's love appears in his convincing us of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and in taking up his eternal abode with us, when we were the most vile, filthy, and abominable creatures, and to every good work reprobate.

The saints have suffered all sorts of torments, and every kind of death, that men or devils could invent, rather than dishonour their God, or lose their exceeding great reward: hence they labour after conformity to him, and disallow of every lust and corruption that resists his sovereign will.

If God arraign, they will not excuse; if he punish, they accept. If he search, they submit; if he condemn, they will not acquit; if he rebuke with fire, they approach the light; if he is wrath, they fear and quake; if he invite, they come up; if he chasten, they submit; if he attract, they follow on; if he frown, then they fear; if he command, they commend;

commend ; if he forbid, they forbear ; if he withdraw, they despond ; if he threaten, they contract ; if he allure, they enlarge ; if he is absent, they are jealous ; if he indulge, they make free ; if his anger burn, they are mute ; if he resist, they withdraw ; he hides himself, they go in search ; his bowels move, their bowels yearn ; if he contend, they attend ; if kindness flow, their spirits melt ; if he forgive, they cannot forget ; if he commune, their heart will burn ; if he embrace, they swoon in love ; if he bind, they will not be free ; if he pull down, they will not build up ; if he should wound, none else shall heal ; if he lay on, they will not throw off ; if he detain, none shall release ; if he afflict, they will not be soothed ; if he shut up, they will not come out ; if he desert, they will not be wooed ; if he cause grief, they will not hear peace ; and, if he chide, they will not flee ; he bends his bow, they yield their breast ; if he delay, they still persist ; if he deny, they will not give up ; he will not relieve, they still entreat ; he says ' Begone,' they importune ; he shuts the door, they knock the more.

The divine and essential Word has taken our nature into God ; and there is a divine nature lodged in all the saints, and no separation can be made, either by life or by death. O my brother, my mouth is opened to thee, my heart is enlarged ; thou art not straitened in me, but in thy own bowels. Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as to my beloved son,) be ye also enlarged. Adieu. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and

endure hardness as a good soldier. The Captain has overcome the world, and the victory is yours.

Ever thine in him,

W. HUNTINGTON,

LETTER X.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

*Fellow-servant and fellow-sufferer, companion in travail
and tribulation, peace and truth be with thee.*

I AM glad that you approve, and that any thing clear, harmonious, consistent, informing, or establishing, appears to you. I shall, therefore, propose to bring forth what little yet remains on my mind, or may yet occur on the sublime subject. Reason, or the dim light of nature, is a poor guide in this mystery. Light in the head, without love and reverence in the heart, has a tendency to exalt. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* A high look, a stiff neck, and a proud heart, God will not suffer; but he will dwell with the humble and the contrite, and will own and acknowledge those that reverence,

reverence, love, and fear him. In his light we see light; and, if teachable and tractable, he will guide us with his eye, and lead us by his Spirit; while the inward anointing, which is the illuminating, renewing, softening, and humbling influences of his grace and Holy Spirit, which the saints experience, will teach them all things necessary to be known, or essential to salvation. Our sufficiency is of God, who can make us able ministers of the New Testament; and, if he does not make us so able as some are, yet we must *minister as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.* 1 Pet. iv. 11. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and our unctuous experience of his divine impressions and influence, must regulate all our views, opinions, and conclusions, upon divine subjects. Whatever the understanding discovers, and the mind conceives, is always handed down to the soul's experience of divine power; the Spirit's work on the soul being an exact and an infallible copy of the revealed mind and will of God in the scriptures of truth; on which account the church is called *the pillar and ground of the truth.* 1 Tim. iii. 15. The Spirit is the author of the scriptures, both of the Old Testament and the New. The gospel is the ministry of the Spirit. 2 Cor. ii. 8. And the Spirit of Christ, in the prophets of the Old Testament, *testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow.* 1 Pet. i. 11. And we are told that *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.* Rev.

xix. 10. Therefore, whatever the enlightened understanding discovers, and the mind perceives or conceives, it is immediately handed down to the experience of the Spirit's teaching within, to see if it be consistent with the anointing which teacheth all things; and, if it agree with the anointing, and has the sanction of the Holy Spirit, immediately the mind is led to the written word for support and confirmation, and the Spirit brings some word home to the mind which proves and establishes it; and this witness of God is greater than the witness of all the men in the world: but, if it agree not with the anointing, and if it receive not the Spirit's sanction, nor any word come in to confirm it, it is rejected and cast out, as being contrary to the anointing. *And ye need not that any should teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you.* 1 John ii. 27. Whatsoever, therefore, contradicts the Spirit's work and his teaching is to be rejected. If my dear brother will attentively observe this inward teaching, he will perceive something of it all the day long; and, without this divine compass, it is in vain to launch out into the profound depths of divine mysteries, and especially that of the Holy Trinity. *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.* Job xi. 8, 9. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever.* Deut. xxix. 29. And God has promised that

that he will give us an heart to know him, for he will pardon them whom he reserves. Jer. l. 20. And again, *For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* Heb. viii. 11, 12. I was led into the glorious mystery of the Holy Trinity by the teaching of God in my own soul. It is written in the prophets, *All thy children shall be taught of God.* Isai. liv. 13. This passage our Lord quotes, *It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* John vi. 45. And it is added, *No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.* John vi. 44. Now, from this divine teaching there is none of God's elect exempted; they shall be all taught of God. And the Saviour informs us, that, by God here, God the Father is meant; and he adds, *Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* He must both hear and learn of the Father before he comes to Christ; nor can any man come to Christ except the Father draw him; and all such, says Christ, *I will raise up at the last day.* John vi. 44. From hence we learn that all the elect are taught of the Father; and that every one of the Father's pupils come to Christ; and, without being drawn by the Father, they cannot come; and those that do come shall be infallibly saved and raised up at the last day.

But then where is the Father's teaching described? How does he teach us? And what do we hear and learn of him? This is what I will endeavour to make plain. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.* Psalm xciv. 11—13. Now the schoolmaster, by which God teaches us, is the moral law; as for the ceremonial law, that was never enjoined to the Gentiles. Out of this law are we taught of God the Father; and our lessons are prefaced with his chastening rod, *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, and teachest:* and Christ says, we both hear and learn of the Father. Two things we hear; first, the chastening rod. *The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.* Micah vi. 9. Here is the voice of the Lord; crying to the chosen, calling the city of Zion; and here is a rod that speaks, *Hear ye the rod.* Now this is what our Lord says—we hear, and we learn of the Father; and he teacheth us out of the law. The second sound that we hear is called the Lord's voice, that cries to the city; and that voice is, by Paul, called a voice of words; it is *blackness, and darkness, and tempest; the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words.* Heb. xii. 18, 19. A voice of words, not a life-giving power. And this voice of words is called a killing letter, or the letter that killeth, which,

when it came to Paul, sin revived, and he died. And what can kill us, but the curse, or sentence, of the ministration of death, engraven on tables of stone? The voice we hear, therefore, is the curse of the broken law condemning us; the rod that we hear is the wrath and anger of God smiting, reproofing, and rebuking us. This is what we hear; and the lessons we learn are, the guilt and filth of sin, the wrath of God, and the enmity of our own hearts. The next lessons we learn are, the holiness, justice, and terrible majesty of God. These are the things that we hear and learn of the Father; and *Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father (says Christ) cometh unto me.* Now what is that which is promised to this blessed man, thus chastened and taught out of the law? Why, God will give him *rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.* The thing promised is *rest*; but who wants rest? None but those who labour, and are heavy laden. The labourer is he who is toiling under the curse and wrath of God, to recommend himself to God's favour, and to get life by the works of the law: and hard labour this is. The load that he carries is the guilt he has contracted, and the corruptions of his heart, which the law discovers; and this is a sore burden, too heavy for any to bear. Now there is a voice in the word to such souls pointing to Christ, *To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing.* Isai. xxviii. 12. The Saviour calls to such souls also—*Come unto me*

me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. But no invitations will do for a poor soul that finds himself condemned already. And, therefore, *No man can come to me* (says Christ) *except my Father draw him.* However, to Christ all that are taught of God must come; for the Spirit of God and the promise of life are both in him; and into his hands are all the elect put, and to his foot they must be brought, and be made to hear his voice and receive the word from his mouth, that they may live. The fiery law comes first to condemn us to death, and the voice and word of the Son of God afterward to raise the dead. *The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, he loved the people: all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.* Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3. This passage shews that all whom the Father teaches out of the fiery law must come to Christ the great prophet, and sit down at his feet to receive of his word. This was the good part which Mary chose, that could not be taken from her. Here Mary Magdalen sat, and got her pardon and her much love; and here God draws us all. But how does he draw us? First, by causing the storms of Sinai now and then to abate, and the arrows of his quiver to lose their keenness.

2dly, By guiding our eyes to the promises, encouragements,

couragements, invitations, and kind pathetic words spoken by the Lord Jesus.

3dly, By causing now and then a ray of light, a beam of hope, and some budding expectations, to spring up in our hearts while we attend to the voice of Christ in the gospel.

4thly, The dreadful passages of scripture that pierced us through get out of sight, and nothing but Christ and his kind dealings with sinners appear; and while our face is turning to the Lord the veil is gradually taken away. The more we see of Jesus, the softer our souls get, and the more our hearts melt; and the more Christ shines in the word, the more we wonder, till his very name appears as a healing ointment poured forth; and, as the bowels yearn over him, so faith in him springs up; the Holy Spirit then testifies of him, and presents him to view, till the understanding becomes susceptible of the light of his countenance, and then confidence goes out and embraces him; then God accepts us *in the beloved*, and gives us *the light of the knowledge of the glory of himself in the face of Jesus Christ*, while the Spirit fills us with joy and peace. And here the soul finds *rest from the days of adversity, till the pit be digged up for the wicked*; that is, they shall rest safe and secure in Christ Jesus, while the wicked fill up their own measure; for the wicked are said to dig their own pit, and to fall into their own destruction. This, my dear brother, is what the apostle calls coming *to God the judge of all*; and then *to Jesus the*

the Mediator of the new testament, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. Heb. xii. 23, 24. This is a saving and an experimental knowledge of the holy and blessed Trinity. We come first to God in a fiery law; when he chastens and judges us, *that we should not be condemned with the world*; 1 Cor. xi. 32; and then draws us to Christ, and accepts us in him. And in Jesus Christ we find rest from both our labour and our load, and; at the same time; we come into the glorious liberty of the children of God. The Holy Ghost sheds abroad the love of God in our heart, and this casts out wrath, which is a spirit of bondage to fear, and all torment with it; and operates in us *as a spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind.* This is an experimental knowledge of the Holy Trinity, and such as none ever experience but the elect of God; and in this way they are all taught of God: and the experience of this good work is such as Satan and all his emissaries can never destroy. No man, made thus wise to salvation, ever dared to set his mouth against the Holy Trinity; and a fool cannot, for this wisdom is too high for him.

This is coming to God, *the fountain of living waters*, Jer. ii. 13; and to Christ, *the well of salvation*, Isaiah xii. 3; and to the river, *the streams whereof make glad the city of God.* Psal. xlv. 4.

Thus, also, saith God: *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Jer.

xxxi. 33. *And I, saith the Saviour, will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.* Rev. iii. 12. And the Spirit makes us living epistles—*Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart.* 2 Cor. iii. 3.

The voice of God the Father's love in the heart is—*Yes, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* Jer. xxxi. 3.

The voice of the atonement of Christ, in the believer's conscience, is, pardon, peace, and reconciliation with God. And these are better things than those spoken by the blood of Abel. Heb. xii. 24.

And the distinct voice of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of all believers is, *Abba, Father.* Gal. iv. 6. This divine teaching, my dear brother, is attended with a holy claim upon God as our own God; and God will own and acknowledge such. To such God speaks, *Thou shalt call me thy Father, and thou shalt not turn away from me,* Jer. iii. 19; which is what no man can do, in truth, without the witness and voice of the Spirit of adoption; for it is he that cries, *Abba, Father.* Such souls, also, claim Jesus for their own, with an infallible witness in their own souls of the truth of it; which no man can do, in truth,

truth, without the Spirit of God; for *no man can say that Jesus is the Lord* (with application) *but by the Holy Ghost.* 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Hence it is plain that the Spirit of God makes us, as he did the prodigal, arise and go to our Father; which, when spoken by the Spirit, is what God will ever own and honour, as he did in that parable—*This is my son.* And, though at times unbelief prevails, yet the Spirit subdues it again and again, as he did in Thomas, *My Lord and my God!* These plain truths, my dear brother, clearly reveal this most sublime mystery; and these things the children of God have in their own experience; and it is such experience as this that worketh hope. This is submitting to divine revelation, and not being wise above what is written. And whatever appears dark to us in the word of God we must pray the Lord to shine upon it, that we may know the mind of the Spirit in it; for it is in his light that we see light. And, *if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*; and he will guide us by his counsel. But let us for ever shun the bold intrusions of unhumbled and un sanctified men, who are so daring and presumptuous; for God will resist such, and make their feet stumble upon the dark mountains; while *the meek he will guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way.* Strange notions are daily circulated in town against these things; and such men *shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*; for, if the force of truth beat them out of one

one refuge of lies, the devil drives them into another; and, being hardened to the last degree, they can adopt words which one dare not recite, and use arguments which it is scandalous to imitate: but the time will come when God *will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.* Isa. xiii. 11.

I shall conclude this long epistle with the triune benediction of heaven—*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God; and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you,* (2 Cor. xiii. 14) and with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ, now and for evermore. So prays, dear brother,

Yours in the ties of immortal love,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

To the man of God, greeting.

BELoved, when I finished my last I thought I had nearly exhausted the treasure that was to be brought forth upon this subject. I went last night to my bed weary, having sat hard at it for fifteen hours; and I thought the spring in my heart, as well as my bodily strength, were both spent. But before I could get to sleep another branch of this subject sprung up, and soon my cup overflowed again, which kept me awake for some time: nor could all my weariness and heaviness counterbalance it, so as to convey me into the regions of forgetfulness. The subject of my contemplation was *communion*; and here another field opened; and, on entering into the small avenue, it soon became a vast expanse. The first thing that struck me was the words of God to Moses—*Thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold; and thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there*

there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat. Exod. xxv. I knew the mercy-seat to be a throne of grace—*A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary.* Jer. xvii. 12. The great condescension of God the Father, which appeared in the above passage, forcibly struck me; the mercy-seat I considered to be a type of Christ, who is our throne of grace—*He is a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and a glorious throne to his Father's house.* Isa. xxii. 23. The two tables of the testimony were to be put into the ark, so that they were not to terrify nor arrest them who fled for mercy: this led me to the words of Christ, which says, *Yea, thy law is within my heart; I delight to do thy will, O my God.* I then considered the words of the Psalmist, which says that, *though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect to the lowly; he humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.* Psal. cxlii. 6. But how much more to meet and commune with men!

To Christ Jesus, who received the sure mercies of David for us, and in whom all the fulness of grace dwells, and who is full of grace and truth, must we poor sinners go, that we may find grace and strength to help in every time of need. And here God promises to meet with us; for Christ is the way to the Father—*Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways.* Isa. lxiv. 5.

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I then considered what were to be the blessed effects of this communion, or what was to be communicated to the children of Israel when God met them in their representative above the mercy-seat, and what they were to communicate to him. They were to communicate their troubles, cares, burdens, wants, fears, requests, &c. to the Lord by prayer; and likewise their recitals of his favours with thanks, praises, blessings, and grateful acknowledgements of them; these were some of the things that they were to communicate to God. And God promises to communicate the following blessings to them by the priests—*The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.* Numb. vi. 24—27. This whole cluster of blessings is now to be found in Christ; the blessing of eternal life is in him; we are in his hand, and kept by his power through faith; the knowledge of the glory of God is in the face of Jesus Christ; from his fulness all grace is received; he is the Sun of Righteousness that rises and shines upon us; and he is our peace, who hath made both one, and broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. These, my beloved brother, were my thoughts of God our heavenly Father communing with us upon the mercy-seat.

My mind then roved to the free and friendly
 1 communion

communion which our Lord Jesus Christ held with Abraham, when he communicated to him his mind and will with respect to the cities of the plain, and how freely Abraham communicated the desires of his soul to the Saviour; all which was granted as long as Abraham could find an heart to ask; and when Abraham stopped in asking the Lord stopped granting. *And the Lord went his way as soon as he had left communing with Abraham, and Abraham returned unto his place.* Gen. xviii. 33.

Then my mind roved to the two disciples going to Emmaus—*And while they communed together Jesus himself drew near, and went with them, and asked them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? They answering him said, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief-priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. And, besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre: and, when they found not his body, they came, saying, That they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.* Luke xxiv. 21—23. Here they communicated

to the Lord Jesus their bitter grief and trouble, and that the crucifixion of their dear Lord was the sole cause of all their calamities, and that the women's account from the angels that he was yet alive was good news. But they could receive no comfort from these things, *for him they saw not.* And now he began and opened up the scriptures concerning his sufferings; and, as they had been eye-witnesses of them, they could compare spiritual things with spiritual, while he opened the prophecies of the things concerning himself. And, after making himself known to them, he vanished out of their sight. However, all that they desired in this world was now granted them: they saw and knew that he was alive—*And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?* Luke xxiv. 32.

I then thought of what the apostle says of our having the same communion with the Holy Spirit also—*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

And upon the subject of communion with the Holy Ghost is my mind now led.

Real communion is the blessed effect of vital union. God communicates no spiritual blessings to them who are in fellowship with devils, with the unfruitful works of darkness, with unrighteousness, or with infidels or heretics—*But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him.* And from this
union

union springs communion; and communion is nothing else but giving and receiving, and is both active and passive: active, in giving or bestowing good things upon others; passive, in receiving good things from others. Now all real believers are united to, and ingrafted into Christ, as the branch is to the vine; and without continual supplies of life, from the vine to the branch, the branch cannot live, much less be fruitful; it must wither and die away.

If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and [wicked] men gather them [into their company] and they are burned. No creature can stand alone; angels could not; Adam could not; Judas could not; no, nor could even Peter.

—Wo to him that is alone when he falleth, for there is not another to help him up. But he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. No stock in hand will do, however large a portion of the Spirit, as Elijah had; however strong the mountain of prosperity, as David's was; however emboldened and fortified, as Peter thought he was when he promised to face either prison or death: all will soon wither without continual supplies. Elijah fled for his life from the face of Jezebel; God hid his face, and David was troubled; and Peter fell before the face of a servant girl. Christ is the root both of David and of all believers—They are wild olive branches grafted into the good olive tree, and partake of the root and farness of the olive tree; and we bear

not the root, but the root bears us. Rom. xi. 17. The life of all trees lies in the root; Christ is our life; and we must live in the root, and the root in us, or there will be no fruit. There are continual communications from the root to the tree, and to every branch of it: let this communication be obstructed, or the union cut off, or the intercourse be stopped up, and the tree will shew it as soon as the sun shines upon it. Nothing less than vital union with the living root, and momentary communications therefrom, can keep us either alive or fruitful. *In that day sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. Momentary support and supplies, and nothing else, can keep the strongest believer standing; without this all joys, yea the strongest joys, will wither away from the sons of men, Joel i. 10. Hence the apostle endeavours to bring his beloved son Timothy off from trusting in his own comfortable frames, however strong they might be, knowing that they are very short-lived, transient, and continually changing—*My son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* 2 Tim. ii. 1. Here grace is, in all its fulness, always the same, and inexhaustible; and it is in the fountain, and not in the streams, that we must trust; for even for temporal supplies it will not do to trust in the grist that is in the house, nor in the barn that fills the grist, nor yet in the harvest that fills the barn; but in the living God, who promises seed-time and harvest, and

and will give us richly all things to enjoy. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

But then how are these momentary supplies of life and strength, grace and help, to be communicated to us? I answer, By the Holy Spirit of God. As it is written, *For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.* Phil. i. 19. Again, *Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* John xvi. 13, 14. All spiritual and temporal blessings, truths, promises, grace, and glory, are secured to us in an everlasting covenant; which covenant was ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ, and therefore he is called the Covenant—I will keep him and give him for a covenant to the people. Isa. xlii. 6. In him all covenant mercies and blessings are, and he is appointed the heir of all things, Heb. i. 2; and we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. Rom. viii. 17.

The first work of the Holy Spirit is to convince of sin. *If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but, if I depart, I will send him unto you. And, when he is come, he will reprove [or convince] the world of sin.* John xvi. 7, 8. Sometimes the Holy Spirit sends the word with such force and terrible majesty, as to arm the conscience of a sinner

with a troop of terrors against him; which stops the mouth even of a gainfayer, and makes the preacher manifest in the conscience even of a persecutor; and yet does not convert him, nor bring him any more to the light; but he so silences him as that such an enemy has been brought to live in peace with a man whose ways have pleased God. Prov. xvi. 7.

But, when the Holy Spirit comes to convince a chosen vessel of sin, he applies the truth with such a piercing power as to penetrate into the deepest recesses of the heart, which alarms and awakens the conscience; and this is followed up with continual reproofs and rebukes; and he attends all his reproofs and rebukes with divine light, which makes the sinner's crimes manifest, and lays them all open to his view, even his secret sins and all his works of darkness—*For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.* Eph. v. 12, 13. No candle ever discovered the foulness of a room, nor the sun in his full strength the dust and atoms that fly in it, as the Holy Spirit discovers the guilt and filth, the corruptions and deceptions, of the human heart; as it is written, *And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees.* Zeph. i. 12. Hence our Lord told the disciples that *men do not light a candle to put it under a bushel.* Matt. v. 15. And when the
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Holy Spirit came upon the apostles: he searched Jerusalem with a witness; he mightily convinced the Jews of their unbelief, of their persecution, rejection, and crucifixion of Christ; and brought it home to their souls with such infallible proofs and facts as cut them to the heart, and made them cry out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* And here I can but take notice of a passage in Solomon's Proverbs, which is as real a prophecy, and was as punctually fulfilled in the apostles' days, as any prediction in the Bible; and sure I am that the words were spoken by the Spirit of Christ indeed—*Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*

Prov. i. 23. This Peter promised them—*Repent, and be baptized every one of you, and you shall receive the Holy Ghost as well as we.* Acts ii. 38. And, as Solomon foretold, desolation came upon the rest—*But ye have set at nought all my counsels, and would none of my reproofs. I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; then shall they call, but I will not answer.* Prov. i. 25—27.

The Spirit not only convinces of sin, and gives cutting reproofs and rebukes for it, but he applies the word with power, and fixes it upon the mind; otherwise the elect would be robbed, as the reprobate is. *Then cometh the wicked one, and steals the word sown out of his heart, and he becometh unfruitful.* But

the Spirit makes a powerful application of the word—by this God gives *testimony to the word of his grace*.

3. The Holy Spirit attends the convictions and reproofs that he gives with life, and the quickening influences of the Spirit make his reproofs sink deep, and this makes the poor sinner's sensations so keen that he cannot rest day nor night: otherwise they would act like Cain, amuse themselves with other things, as he did when he built a city; or like Saul, who sought to the witch of Endor; or like the young man in the gospel, who went away sorrowful, and yet hugged his worldly possessions. But it is not so with a soul convinced by the Holy Spirit; he does not want to shake his convictions off by going from Christ, as the convicted accusers of the adulterous woman did; all his fears are, that his convictions will wear off, and that he shall be given up to his own heart's lust. For

4. The Holy Spirit makes his heart honest—He receives the word in an honest and good heart; and therefore *comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God*. His language is, Search me and try me. He accepts the punishment of his iniquity, and would put his mouth in the dust, if so be that there might be hope; he kisses the rod, and dreads the thoughts of carnal ease. He is an enemy to them that would bolster him, or cry, *Peace, Peace*, to him, or heal his wounds slightly—*To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet*. He would sooner labour under the guilt of sin, and the
 wrath

wrath of God, than fail of his grace, or be set down short of the promised rest. He sees the deceitfulness of sin, the treachery of his heart, and the cunning of the devil; and trembles at the sentence of the law, and the severity of the Most High—*He that rebukes him finds more favour in his eyes than he that flatters with his lips.* Sweet to him are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. Thus does the Holy Spirit communicate power, life, honesty, and sincerity, with the convictions and reproofs which he applies to the elect of God.

5. He supports them under the burden of sin which they feel, and under the sight of it which he presents to their view, and sustains them under the wrath and curse of a broken law—They are *bolpen with a little help.* Through the fire he is with them, and through the water; or else the former would dry up their spirits, and the latter drown them in desperation. And in all these things the convinced sinner obeys his divine operator, though he does not know who it is that leads him. The evils which the Holy Spirit discovers to him he confesses; the reproofs he gives he falleth under; to the word the Spirit leads him, and he searches the scriptures daily. Where he hears the word with power, and where he finds his case pointed out, there the preacher is made manifest in his conscience; there he desires to abide, however searching and trying the ministry may be; for where he gets his wounding there

where he expects his healing—*He that is of God beareth God's word. We are of God (says John), and he that is of God beareth us; and he that is not of God beareth not us.*

6. The same Spirit that gives him light and quickening grace sets him to crying to God—*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications. Zech. xii. 10.* The life and feeling, the holy longings, the desires, thirstings, cravings, and bitter cries, which are found in the convinced sinner, all spring from the energy and operations of the Holy Spirit of God: hence the many precious promises that are held forth in the word of God to rich poor souls—*Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night? When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. Wait upon God, and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart: trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass. They shall come that are ready to perish. Because of the deep sighing of the poor, now will I arise, saith the Lord. I will satiate the weary, I will replenish the sorrowful soul, I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Again, Thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it he will answer thee. Isa. xxx. 19.* All these in-

tense

terrible longings and holy breathings are produced under the quickening energy of the Holy Spirit, even before he proclaims liberty to us, nor creates *the fruit of the lip*, Isa. lvii. 19; or gives us a *door of utterance*. Acts ii. 4. *The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered*. Rom. viii. 26. And this may be seen in the apostles themselves, before that miraculous outpouring of the Spirit upon them, on the day of pentecost. The apostles had felt the power of the Spirit attending the word—*He speaks like one having authority, and not as the scribes; for his word is with power*. He had convinced them of sin, as may be seen in their different cases, described by our Lord's first sermon on the mount, and by the confession of Peter—*Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*. They owned that Christ had the *word of eternal life*; yea, and they believed in him—*Father, the word which thou hast given me I have given them, and they have received it, and have believed that I came forth from thee, and that thou didst send me*. And they loved him too, and abode with him: and both faith and love are fruits of the Holy Spirit. But, as a spirit of revelation and understanding, as a distinct comforter, as a spirit of power and of a sound mind, and with all his miraculous gifts and graces, they were to be baptized with him in this wonderful way not many days hence. Hence it is said that *the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus*
was

was not yet glorified. Power, also, in a wonderful manner, they were to receive when the Holy Ghost came upon them, to embolden them, and enable them to preach the gospel in all languages, and to work miracles in confirmation of it.

I must once more beg the pardon of my beloved brother for thus exceeding the limits of an epistle; but hope to have an opportunity of conveying this, as I did the other, by some stroller or straggler wandering from his nest. Begetting, quickening, travailing, and bringing forth, still go on among us—*our bed is green.* Song, i. 16.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

WHAT, my son! and what, the son of my faith! and what, the son of my vows! Children are not to lay up for the fathers, but the fathers for the children; and I would willingly give thee one portion above thy brethren; yea, a double portion; because thou art poor and needy, near-sighted, subject to the rickets, to incredulity, and many other infirmities which have gone from father to son; but, as poring over these things, with fretting and grieving at them, does no good, we will amuse and comfort ourselves with a better subject.

7. The Holy Spirit testifies of Christ—*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.* John xv. 26. And this the Holy Spirit does by giving testimony to the word of his grace; by proving the truth and reality of the word to the sensible sinner's conscience; by attending it with faith, light, evidence, and full demonstration; so that Christ is evidently set forth as crucified before them, Gal. iii. 1. Christ's voice is heard and felt, and his

his all-subduing power is displayed in the soul. The Spirit testifies of him as the almighty and eternal God, by the glorious majesty of Christ which the Spirit discovers, and which shines into the soul.—*Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of God is risen upon thee; and the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.* Under this manifestation the soul falls prostrate before him; owns, honours, adores, and worships him. The Spirit testifies of him as our high-priest, and applies the atonement, with pardon and peace, as the blessed effects of it. He testifies of him as our physician; and the proof of it is, our iniquities are all forgiven, and all our infirmities are healed: He testifies of him as the end of the law for righteousness, by applying his righteousness to the heart, and by passing the sentence of justification upon the conscience; at which time Christ, as our Advocate, silences all our accusers; and, as our Mediator, he gives us access to God, a claim upon him, and boldness with him. The Holy Spirit testifies of him as our King, and reveals him as such, and erects his empire in the soul upon our reception of Christ; which stands in power, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. When sin is dethroned, the devil, his armour, and artillery, are cast out; death is abolished, life and immortality is brought to light, and the fear of death and the dread of damnation are dispersed; and all our perplexing doubts, cares, and gloomy thoughts about it scattered

tered into all winds. Thus, my dear brother, does the Holy Spirit testify of Christ, and gives evident proofs of his ability to save to the uttermost; he realizes his saving benefits, applies his merits, proclaims his omnipotence, his mild and blessed government, the powerful sway of his righteous sceptre, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

8. The application of all the promises is the work of the Holy Spirit. The promise of life and the spirit of life always go together, for it is the powerful application of the word by the Spirit that makes the promise—*The incorruptible seed, the word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever.* All the promises of divine consolation have their sincere milk from Christ by the Holy Spirit: one promise brings peace, another joy, another love, another comfort, another rest; just as the Holy Spirit sends them in, so they discharge their rich contents: the hungry soul, by exercising faith upon them, sucks the sweetness of them, till he is filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.* Isa. lxvi. 10, 11. There is no converting, refreshing, encouraging power attends the word without the Spirit's operation. When he makes application of it, faith, life, and love attend it; for *our gospel came not unto you in*

word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. 1 Thess. i. 5. And various are the sensations of the soul under the Spirit's influence when he applies the word: sometimes it is a word of support that fortifies and strengthens; sometimes a word of encouragement to keep us watching, waiting, and to bear us up under trials and crosses; sometimes a word of correction that leads us to self-examination, which awes us, and excites watchfulness and amendment; at other times a soft word that breaketh the bone, and melts us under a sense of undeserved love and self-abhorrence; and often a word of instruction to correct the mind, disperse some wrong notion, to inform the judgment, and to bring more harmonious and consistent views of things to the soul. Innumerable are the ways by which the Holy Spirit works by the word, and in his application of it; but it is always a seasonable application; *And a word spoken in due season, how good is it? A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.* Prov. xv. 23. and xxv. 11.

9. The secret things of God, such as his counsel and covenants, are made known to us by the Holy Spirit—*What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 11. The Holy Spirit, when he has testified of Christ to us, leads us back to his great undertaking and appointment from everlasting; he leads us up to the everlasting love of God, and to his
absolute

absolute choice of us in Christ Jesus ; to his secret decrees of election and predestination ; to his good will of purpose in Christ, and to the secret counsel of his will ; and to his covenant made with Christ before the world began—*For the froward is abomination to the Lord ; but his secret is with the righteous.* Prov. iii. 32. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him ; and he will shew them his covenant.* Psalm xxv. 14. The secret of predestinating us to the adoption of children by Christ Jesus, and of his giving us life in him, and of his ordaining us to it before the world began, is revealed and made known to the elect of God by the Spirit ; and our knowledge of these things, and of our interest in them, is our highest wisdom—*But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory ; which none of the princes of this world knew ; for, had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* But as it is written, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit ; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 7—10. Our faith is called *the faith of God's elect*, not only because it is a grace peculiar to them, but because God's election of us is a truth revealed to faith, and a truth which faith apprehends and holds fast ; for there can be no such thing as making our calling and election sure, without being

assured that there is such a doctrine as election. From God's secret counsel and covenant springs no small part of our unspeakable joy. God fills us with joy and peace in believing, and especially in believing our election of God—*Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.* Luke x. 20. If these things are lacking in our faith, our faith is deficient in one of the most sublime and establishing articles. He that believeth the love that God hath to him, is led to believe that this love took its rise from eternity (for there are no new acts in God); and from those ancient settlements are the goings forth of Christ dated.—*But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* Micah v. 2. Into these deep things does the Holy Spirit lead us, and into a humble acquiescence with them, and fills us with wonder and astonishment at them. And he likewise leads us into the distinct personal works of the holy and blessed Trinity. As a spirit of adoption he gives us power and boldness to claim our interest in God as our Covenant-God and Father—*To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* This birth makes our sonship clear: love gives us a dwelling
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in God—*He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Faith gives us a dwelling in Christ—*That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.* And the Spirit's witness proves our adoption—the Spirit cries, *Abba, Father.* Receiving power to become the sons of God, is receiving the Spirit; and by the Spirit the grace of faith, to enable us, as I before observed, with a holy boldness to claim our sonship before God.—*But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.* Jer. iii. 19. This promise the Spirit makes good; he makes us say, *My father.* And this may be seen in the prodigal son—*I will arise, and go to my father.* These words were spoken under the emboldening and encouraging influence of the spirit of adoption; and whatever the Holy Spirit says or does is always owned and honoured by God the Father, and confirmed in heaven; as may be seen in that parable—*This is my son,* says God; *he was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.* The Jews spoke the same language the prodigal did, even to Christ—*We have one father, even God.* But this is neither owned nor honoured; for, *If God were your Father,* (says Christ) *you would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth,*

truth, because there is no truth in him. John viii. 42,44: Thus we see that no claim upon birth-privileges, no, not upon national adoption; no unwarrantable, no presumptuous claims upon God, are either approved or confirmed.

10. The Holy Spirit is given for a witness to us. *If we receive the witness of men, (as many do, and rest in it,) the witness of God is greater. He that believes hath the witness in himself.* And sure I am that without the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost no poor convinced, self-condemned, and self-despairing sinner could ever lay any claim upon the Almighty. A sensible sinner, who feels the enmity of his mind and the rebellion of his heart, who is loathsome in his own sight, and conscious to himself that he is a child of wrath, and a willing drudge to Satan; for such an one to call God his father (even while God's wrath and jealousy seems to smoke against him) he would think it the vilest presumption in such a wretch as he, and the greatest affront and insult, the greatest dishonour and indignity, that could be offered to the majesty of heaven—He may say *to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm, Thou art my mother.* Job xvii. 14. But to think that God would, or could, ever acknowledge or accept such an one as a child of his, is what would never have entered his mind world without end, if the Holy Ghost did not put it there. And he does it in the following manner:—First, he silences all the sinner's accusers and all accusations, and brings the
confused

confused and confounded soul into a state of the most profound calm, quietude, peace, and tranquillity. Here our sins, which appeared like the sins of Sodom, crying to heaven; conscience, also, with his cutting accusations; the law, with all its curses and unlimited demands; justice, with his calls for vengeance; Satan, with all his blasphemies, fiery darts, accusations, and terrible suggestions; together with all our heart-misgivings and heart-risings, and those terrible passages of scripture which describe the fruitless cry of Esau, the horrors of Judas, the misery of Cain, the distraction of Saul, and the fearful end of Corah, Abiram, and Dathan; are all stilled and hushed into the profoundest silence, the violent storm of wrath abates, and the troubled sea ceases from her raging. The poor sinner stands astonished to know what are become of all his accusers; he looks about him, and finds that all his sins which were set in order against him, all his secret sins which stood in the light of God's countenance, are blotted out as a cloud, and his transgressions as a thick cloud; and, as far as the east is from the west, so far does God separate our transgressions from us. The guilt and filth of sin within is all purged away, and every inbred corruption is subdued and out of sight; so that not one unclean bird remains upon the living sacrifice. The Holy Spirit sets Christ crucified before the eye of faith; while the Spirit, in the application of the blood of

sprinkling, speaks pardon, peace, reconciliation, and perfect friendship. Sin being purged, nothing separates or stands between God and the soul. The Holy Ghost sheds abroad God's love in the heart, which casts out fear and torment, doubts and all misgivings of the heart about it; while love dissolves the stony heart, melts the stubborn mind, and makes the rebellious will submit and become pliant. Joy unutterable flows in, while floods of pious and godly sorrow flow out. The benign Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort, indulges the soul with the greatest freedom and familiarity, and with nearness of access to him. God shines well-pleased in the face of Jesus, accepts and embraces the soul in him; while faith, attended with the fullest assurance, springs up and goes forth in the fullest exercise upon the everlasting love of God, and on the finished salvation of Jesus Christ, and is fully persuaded of her eternal interest in both; while the Holy Spirit cries, *Abba, Father*: to which cry both law and gospel, the love of God and the blood of Christ, retributive justice and honest conscience, all put their hearty amen.

The Holy Spirit, with the witness that he bears, follows the convinced sinner through every stage of his experience, from his first awakening, until his translation into the kingdom of God takes place. So that the convinced sinner who comes to the light, who waits upon God, and waits for him, has the witness

witness of the Spirit in his own heart to the truth of what he feels, and of what he seeks. The Spirit bears his witness to the reality of his wants; to the deep sense that he has of his sins; to the honesty and integrity of his soul; to his fervent cries and earnest searches; to his real grief on account of his sins, and his earnest desire of deliverance from them. Nor can such a soul look either God or conscience in the face, and say, I am neither awakened nor quickened; I am neither in earnest, honest, nor sincere. Nor dare he say, I have no hunger nor thirst after God, nor that I neither labour nor am heavy laden. Nor dare he say that he has neither hope nor expectation of better days and better tidings; nor dare he say that there is no truth in him, nor that God has done nothing for him; nor would he change states (miserable as he is) with the most secure pharisee, nor with the most gifted professor in the world; nor would he part with his dreadful feelings, the chastisements, the reproofs of God, the bitter sense he has of his sins, nor the intolerable burden of them, for all the treasures of Egypt, unless he could get rid of them the right way; namely, by an application of the atoning blood of Christ. He can smell the stinking savour of an hypocrite in Zion, and feel the barrenness and emptiness of a minister of the letter; he can see through a sheep's skin on a wolf's back, and knows the empty sound of swelling words. Neither the graceless heart of a foolish

foolish virgin, nor the arrogance of them that talk of liberty while they are the servants of corruption, are hid from him—though he is fast *bound in affliction and iron*. He is a strange creature both to himself and others. He speaks a language that few understand; and it is a language that he cannot explain. He is always in action, and acts a part that astonishes himself. He sucks his sweets from bitterness (Prov. xxvii. 7), and cleaves to the rod that beats him. By affliction he lives, and in the shadow of death he finds the most life. He gets health in his sickness, and healing in his wounds; satisfaction in sorrow; life in death; faith in severity; hope in heaviness; and expectation in self-despair. His burden is more than he can bear, yet he dreads the thought of losing it. He is completely miserable, yet he hates ease. And, though his life hangs in doubt, he trembles at the thoughts of security. And that which he is most afraid of, is that which he seeks most after. None work so hard as he, and none so great an enemy to works. To secure himself is all his concern, and yet he hates himself more than he hates the devil.

Beloved, farewell; be of good comfort, follow peace, and the God of truth and peace shall be with thee. I add no more at this time, but my poor petitions, and subscribe myself

Yours in him,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XIII.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the New Vicarage,
near the Deanery, Lewes, Sussex.*

*To his Excellency the Welsh Ambassador his friend
sendeth greeting.*

AMBASSADORS personate their sovereigns, and are as their mouth in foreign courts; and are, or should be, respected according to their wisdom and faithfulness, and according to the greatness, dignity, and formidability of their royal masters. But, O, my beloved, what an honour is it to be an ambassador of the King of kings! called and commissioned, owned and honoured, by him; and to be in a pardoned and justified state; in union, in fellowship, and in peace with him: and therefore ambassadors of peace, bearers of good tidings, publishers of salvation, and that say unto Zion, *Tby God reigneth!* Such are the chariots of the Lord of hosts, in which he rides, and by which he bears his name among the Gentiles; out of which he shines, and from whom he sends out his line into all the earth, and his words to the end of the world. Infinite condescension is this. And when we consider what we were; how mean! how low! how poor!
how

how despicable!—But he hath chosen the poor, the weak, the foolish, and the base, that he may stain the pride of human glory, and bring into contempt the honourable of the earth. *Now he which establisheth us in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God: who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Upon this delightful subject I shall yet proceed.

11. The Holy Spirit is to aid and assist the true worshippers of God in every branch of religious worship; and the saints must *serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.* God requires worship suitable to his nature—*God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; for God seeketh such to worship him.* Worship in the spirit is opposed to all carnal worship with a dead form, in which the body only is engaged; and therefore called *bodily exercise*, which *profiteth little.* Worshipping God in truth is opposed to all false, deceitful, and hypocritical worship, when the heart and soul are altogether disengaged—*They draw near to me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but their heart is far from me; therefore in vain they worship me.* In order to this true worship we must be purged and purified, justified and sanctified, and influenced with the Holy Spirit of God. God requires a pure offering, and an offering in righteousness; or offerings offered up by persons in a justified state.—*And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the*
sons

sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. Mal. iii. 3, 4. The days of old, and the ancient times spoken of, are the days of Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Melchizedek, Isaac, and Jacob, &c. of whom, and of whose worship, we have no fault; but they obtained a good report through faith. Now God promises that, under the gospel, the same acceptable worship shall be performed; and therefore he promises to influence and guide us in every branch of it—*For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.* Isaiah lxi. 8. And the Lord directs us in all our works by his Holy Spirit, and especially in prayer—*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* Rom. viii. 26, 27. The apostle here tells us that we know not what we should pray for as we ought, unless the Spirit help us. And there are prayers that have been put up by good men that have not been answered—*Elijah requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough: now, O Lord, take away my life; for*
I am

I am not better than my fathers. 1 Kings xix. 4. Zebedee's wife's request for her two sons, to sit, one at the right hand of Christ, and the other at the left, meets with no better answer than this—*Ye know not what ye ask.* Matt. xx. 22. Which shews us the need of a Spirit of grace and supplication. The Holy Spirit enlightens us to see our wants, and quickens us to feel them, and creates a hunger and a thirst after the provision of God's house; and then leads our minds into the word, and shews us what is held forth, promised, and freely given to us—*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* 1 Cor. ii. 12. The Holy Spirit, which searches the deep things of God, knows what is in reserve for us, and the time appointed for us to receive that which God hath laid up for us; and he sets us to praying for them when that time arrives. Thus, when the time of Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage drew near, the spirit of supplication was poured out, and the cries of the children of Israel went up. *And God heard their groanings; and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them.* Exod. ii. 24, 25. So, in Daniel, just as the time was approaching for them to return to their own land, Daniel understands, by the prophecies of Jeremiah, that God would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem; then Daniel sets his
face

face to the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. Dan. ix. 3. So, also, there is a set time to favour Zion, and every one that is ordained to be of her community; a set time for every purpose; and, when that time is up, which the Holy Spirit is perfectly acquainted with, then he makes intercession with such energy, that the kingdom of heaven, which suffereth violence, is taken by force. The Holy Spirit furnishes the soul with suitable promises to plead, with invitations and encouraging passages of scripture: these he brings to the mind and puts into the mouth, enabling the soul to use all sorts of arguments, pleadings, intercessions, supplications, confessions, and reasonings; and, at the same time, helps the poor creature against his unbelief, misgivings of heart, desponding thoughts, shame, fear, and confusion of face. He draws forth faith into lively exercise, and raises up hopes and expectations of being heard and answered. He emboldens the poor sinner, and fortifies his mind; he strengthens his heart, silences his accusers, and clothes his words with power; enabling him to pour out his very soul before God with earnest cries and tears, till his cares and concerns, his burdens, his griefs, his distresses and sorrows, his doubts and fears, all flow out with his words; and he goes from Shiloh with his countenance no more sad. How did he help Manassah, who was an idolater and a wizard, who made Judah and Jerusalem do worse than the heathen, and who was deaf to all warning and admonition,

monition, till God brought an host against him, who took him and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon? *And when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him; and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.* 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13. How did the Holy Spirit furnish the poor Syrophenician woman with her great faith and treble plea, till she got all her heart's desire? He made the poor prodigal claim his sonship in a far country, even when stung with the guilt of sinning against heaven and before God, as his own father in covenant; and Hezekiah, also, when both heaven and earth seemed to combine against him. Some of the children of God, who have foully fallen, and brought on themselves, and on God's cause and family, open reproach and scandal; as Noah, David, Peter, &c. and those who have awfully backslidden, and got into sin and into the world, till their hearts have been almost hardened from fear, and who would have gone from bad to worse, till they had become quite callous; and return no more, if the Holy Spirit, either by his own immediate operations, or by the instrumentality of some Nathan, did not alarm and awaken them to a sense of their state; and, when they are awakened and brought to a sense of their sins, their crimes are aggravated with such a complication

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plication of circumstances, and attended with such bitter reflections as would sink them for ever, if the power of the Spirit was not put forth in them. Sins against light and love; against comfort, joy, and peace; against a merciful and compassionate Father; against all the blessings of the better testament; against a God formerly known and enjoyed, and against a Saviour revealed, and after union, communion, and fellowship with him; and against the consolations, witnessing, and sealing of the Holy Spirit of promise. Looking back to the glorious times that are past; to the blessed days of the Son of man; and to the joy, peace, rest, quietude, and happiness then enjoyed.—But now all is gone. “Fool that I am,” says the poor creature; “for a little pelf, a little imagined pleasure, and by the deceitfulness of sin, am I shorn of all my strength, and divested of all true happiness. I have stumbled the weak, and have opened the mouths of the enemies of my God: they that have watched for my halting, and who would rejoice when I am moved, and who eat up the sin of God’s people as they eat bread, will now say, This is the day that we have looked for. My smiling God is gone, and all sweet intercourse appears to be cut off. The Holy Spirit is grieved; no access to a throne of grace, no liberty in the Spirit, no liberty of speech. A dismal gloom appears in the Bible; nothing but reproofs and rebukes from the pulpit, barrenness in the pew, a fallen counte-

nance before the world; and nothing but secret rage, envy, and jealousy in my heart, when I am among them that love God, which casts a damp upon all their holy fire. O my base ingratitude!—*Fools, because of their iniquities, are afflicted.* I may go halting to my grave under fatherly severity, and perhaps it will be worse than that. Who knows but I have committed the unpardonable sin, and have crucified Christ afresh, and done despite to the Spirit of grace, and therefore am a castaway?"

A sheep thus strayed would never return, a soul thus fallen would never rise more, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. David knew this when he prayed—*Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.* Psalm li. 11. A soul under such circumstances watches, observes, and attends all the day long to the Holy Spirit, to see if he can find any enlargement of heart, any risings of hope and expectation, any goings forth in faith or affection, any freedom of soul or of speech in prayer, any flowings out of godly sorrow, any founding of the bowels after God, any real compunction, contrition, or pious mourning after the Lord; if there be any goings forth of love to him; if any filial or childlike fear of him springing up, which has the goodness of God for its object; if he can find any fortitude, help, or inward support, or assistance in prayer; if any word come to assuage his grief, to soften the heart, to support, encourage, or to produce submission to the will of God; if
there

there be any dispersion of his fears and terrors; if any self-abhorrence or self-loathing; if Satan's accusations and fiery darts lose their force, or abate in their violence; if the reproaches of conscience get less severe. Thus does the poor distressed soul wait upon the Holy Spirit, and watch and observe every influence, operation, or change, that is made in the heart; and greedily catches every hint, dictate, sensation, motion, affection, allurements, or encouragement, which is produced in the soul; and weighs it, considers it, embraces it, and interprets it in his own favour as far as circumstances, truth, and conscience will permit him.

Sometimes souls under such relapses find that the law is armed with fresh wrath and terrors against them, and that bitter things in that hand-writing appear against them; that it lays a fresh hold of them, and binds them fast—*The strength of sin is the law.* 1 Cor. xv. 56. The spirit of bondage seizes them and shuts them up; which is nothing else but the anger of God working wrath, slavish fear, terror, and torment, in them; under which they are contracted, bound, and hemmed in; shut up in unbelief, in hardness of heart, and under the rebukes of God, and in fear of worse to come; and while thus imprisoned neither faith nor love dare to venture out. Hence David complains in his fall—*Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am*

*come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. Pl. lxi. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin: for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit. Psalm li. And again—O, my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water-spouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Psalm xlii. In the above the psalmist feels the spirit of bondage, which is wrath and fear; and he prays for the joy of God's salvation, and to be upheld by God's free spirit; which is the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love and power. He complains of *deep calling unto deep*. A soul in the horrible pit hears little else but the calls of law and justice for vengeance, which are always answered again by the accusations of Satan and conscience. The storms of Sinai, like a water-spout at sea, threaten the earthen vessel with a deluge of wrath, which would soon drown it in destruction and perdition. These waves of real, and some imaginary displeasure (no less terrible than real) rolling over the poor creature, are ready to fend the
bark*

bark to the bottom. This is the terrible way in which some fallen and backsliding souls are purged and reclaimed; and especially such as have brought public scandal upon the gospel and church of Christ, as the incestuous Corinthian, &c. Others are revived and restored by more gentle means—*A soft tongue shall break their bones.* Prov. xxv. 15. Divine kindness shall melt them, humble and soften them. But even this unexpected kindness, which is coyly received, and in much self-aborrence often put from them, as they are utterly unworthy of the least notice of God, and is mixed with some resentment, which keeps the soul at a distance, mixing his fear with trembling; and when any child of God is raised up and restored in this way, as the poor prodigal was, when the *kiss*, the *robe*, and the *ring*, quite killed him; and as a propitious look from the Lord Jesus Christ killed Peter to sin, self, and the world, when he went out, and, with a flood of the tears of penitence and love, discharged the guilt with which he had been drenched while in the sieve of Satan. Such are forgiven; but it is long before they can forgive themselves. They are acquitted by God; but they will not suffer conscience to acquit them.—*What carefulness it works in them! yea, what clearing of themselves! yea, what indignation! yea, what fear! yea, what vehement desire! yea, what zeal! yea, what revenge!* 2 Cor. vii. 11.

Thus, my dearly-beloved brother, does the Holy Spirit help the infirmities of the saints of God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ; and continually communicates grace from his fulness to help us in every time of need: whose inexhaustible fulness of grace is sufficient to change the heart of the stoutest rebel, to raise up the fearfully fallen, and to restore the most awful backslider.—*Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim. i. 16, 17.* And so says,

Your affectionate servant, friend, and brother,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER

LETTER ~~III~~ IV.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the new Vicarage,
Lewes, Sussex.*

*The Coalbeaver to the Welsh Ambassador sendeth greet-
ing, with words of peace and love.*

BELoved, the perishing soul, parched with the heat of a fiery law, who is led to the fountain of living water to drink, is to have a well of living water in his heart, which is to spring up into everlasting life. I know that Christ has rent the heavens and come down; that there is a new and living way opened into the holy of holies; and that he has admitted our hearts and hopes, our faith and our affections, already to the right hand of God, where he sitteth: and where our heart is, there is our treasure. And there is nothing that men delight in more than in their treasure: of this they boast, and on this they set their mind, and this generally employs their thoughts; and therefore you must not wonder if I come again and again, for we have heavenly treasure even in earthen vessels. The next thing that I shall treat of is,

12. The assistance of the Spirit against Satan.—
So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west,

this time in my hands? You have often, and (as you thought) with the deepest self-aborrence, confessed your own vileness, and told God that had he destroyed you he would have been strictly righteous, for you have been an awful sinner against him. God only softened your heart, and gave you a little joy, like that of the way-side hearers, on purpose to draw those confessions out of your mouth, that he may take advantage of it, and condemn you out of your own mouth, as a wicked servant. And not only this, but you have called God himself your Father, as the Jews of old did, when the devil himself was their father; and you have called Jesus Christ your dear Lord and Master, when you know at this very time that I have full power over you. Never, no never, was there such a headstrong, daring, presumptuous, God-dishonouring wretch as you. You a saint! You look like one; don't you? No, no; do not deceive yourself; all your joys and hopes, and all your comfort, that you ran from house to house and chattered about, it all came from me. I can transform myself into the likeness of an angel of light; I can counterfeit all the joys and comforts of the Holy Spirit on purpose to deceive. The whole work in you was all my own, and I did it on purpose to entrap you. Back to my work you must come, for you are still my captive, and I will make you fetch up all your lost time; and this the scripture declares when it says, *and the last state of that man is worse than the first.*

“ Deceiving

*“ Deceiving and being deceived. I have deceived you, and you have deceived others. You have been to your minister and told him a thousand lies, and have deceived him; for he thinks it is a work of grace. And you have been to old Honesty and told him your experience; you have been to Dame Simplicity and filled her head; and to Miss Lovetruth, and she thinks you are a wonder. Go, go, and undeceive them all; tell them what you really are; that you always was a forward, daring, bold, arrogant rebel; and that you have added this, your deceitful and hypocritical profession, to all the rest of your innumerable and complicated crimes. Never, never more open your mouth, nor drop one word to any soul living about religion—yea, if your heart be hot within you keep silence, even from good words; for you will be a reproach, a public scandal, a by-word, and an offence; and *wo be to that man through whom the offence cometh*. You will stumble these poor weaklings that you have tried to encourage, by telling them your experience; these will faint and give all up: and you know what Christ says to them who offend one of these little ones that believe in him—Good had it been that thou hadst never been born: yea, *better that a millstone were hanged about thy neck, and that thou wert drowned in the depths of the sea, than that thou shouldst offend one of these little ones*.*

“ No soul that ever appeared upon the stage of time, no character that is drawn in the annals of
God,

God, ever appeared so desperate as yours. Cain was banished from his father's house; Esau's cries and tears, and his hatred to Jacob, sprung chiefly for a blessing in temporal things; and Saul's hatred to David was mostly because he viewed him as the rival of his family in a temporal kingdom: but your crimes are worse than theirs, put them all together. For you hate the people of God because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit is in their souls; and to be jealous, envious, and hateful, not only to the children of God, but even to the comforts of the Holy Spirit, is an evident token of perdition. Go, tell them all what you really are, and undeceive them; and tell them never to lift up either cry or prayer for you—*There is a sin unto death; I do not say he shall pray for it.* Tell them that all your faith was nothing but presumption, and that all your claims upon God were unwarrantable and daring intrusions—*And the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, that soul shall be destroyed from among his people.* You will now be held up to contempt, and be made a public example to deter others; yea, *a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.* And, as for me, I will harass, worry, and drive you, as I did the mad Gadarene into the wilderness. I never sweat nor tire. I will pursue you with unremitted violence, till I drive you mad and desperate.

“ Law sinners, that know nothing of the will of God in the gospel, will be beaten with few stripes;

the heathen, who are a law to themselves, will be beaten with fewer still. But you are an impossor, a hypocrite in Zion, and a sinner against the Holy Ghost; the hottest place in hell is your portion, and I will punish you (for I am the tormentor) worse than all the slaves I have, unless you will *fall down and worship me*. It is in vain to cry to God, for there is no God; nor is it of any use to plead the promises, for the Bible is not true, I dictated it; it was compiled by cunning and designing men which I employed on purpose to deceive the simple. Hence many noblemen, and some of the most learned in all the nation, burlesque it and ridicule it as a mere fable and as an idle tale."

Thus with violence doth the devil break in upon the young believer and harass him, when it pleases God to leave him for the trial of his faith, and that he may know what is in his heart; and thus he used to serve me. Well may the prophet say, *The enemy comes in like a flood*; for all seems to be swept and carried away before him. Nothing appears to be left but the bare remembrance of things past, and sometimes hardly that. But, when the enemy comes in like a flood, *the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him*. This standard is Christ Jesus. *Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people*. Isa. xlix. 22. This standard is intended to gather together God's elect to Christ, as will appear in the following passage.—*Go through, go through the gates; prepare you the way of the*

the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. Isa. lxii. 10, 11. Christ is the rod from out of the stem of Jesse; he is the standard and the ensign staff; his everlasting love is the banner; a daily cross and a crown of glory is the motto upon the banner; ministers of Christ are standard-bearers; these are commanded to go through the gates, to cast up the way, to gather out the stones, and to lift up the standard to the people. But then we can only lift up the standard *to* the people, not *in* them: whereas the enemy is said to get into them—*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, &c.* All indoor-work belongs to the Holy Spirit. We can only preach to the outward ear, and set forth the Lord Jesus Christ before them; which is called lifting up a standard *to* them. But it is the Holy Spirit that testifies of Christ to the heart, and that lifts up the standard against Satan in the soul. And this he does by dispersing all the darkness and confusion which the devil has spread over the mind; and by subduing our inbred corruptions which the devil has stirred up, and by enlightening the understanding afresh, and presenting the Saviour as shining into the soul, and by drawing forth faith, hope, love, repentance, and godly sorrow, to go forth and flow out to him; and, at the same time, raising up and bringing

bringing forth to the believer's view the whole work of grace in his soul; by passing afresh the sentence of justification in the court of conscience, by brightening every evidence, bearing his own witness afresh, shedding abroad again God's love in the heart, and filling the soul with joy and peace in believing. Now, says the soul, let my enemy come! No, no; Satan knows better; he will not face thee with all that armour about thee. He lays at the catch; he hates the believing voice of triumph. When he hears thee mourning alone and sitting solitary, then he will visit thee again with a, *Where is now thy God?* These are Satan's times, and he will let us know it. But still the Spirit lifts up the standard against him, and unfolds the banner of God's love, again and again, in the behalf of them that fear God, that his beloved may be delivered from the power of sin and Satan.—*Thou hast given a banner to them that feared thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth, Selah. That thy beloved may be delivered; save with thy right hand, and bear me.* Psal. lx. 4, 5. As sure as ever Satan obscures the blessed work, and raises doubts in the poor sinner's mind about the reality of it, so sure does the Spirit lift up the standard against him, and revives the work, and brings it forth again to the light, that we may behold the righteousness of God in it. He does it over and over again, till he has strengthened, stablished, and settled us.

13. Our fruitfulness, also, is owing to the indwelling

dwelling and operation of the Holy Spirit.—*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance : against such there is no law.* Gal. v. 22, 23. Again, *For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.* Eph. v. 9. Christ is our living root; the indwelling of the Holy Spirit makes us one with Christ; while the everlasting love of God the Father to us in him unites us to him. From his fulness does the Holy Spirit continually supply us—We receive from his fulness, and grace for grace. Present grace to assure us of future grace; or sanctifying grace in this life as a pledge of glorifying grace in heaven. The Spirit takes of the things that are Christ's, and shews them unto us—his undertaking, his finished work; his truths, doctrines, and promises; his righteousness, peace, and satisfaction; his mysteries, his kingdom, and the power and majesty of it; his exaltation, meditation, intercession, and glorification in heaven above. This is the work of the blessed Spirit; and this union with Christ Jesus does the Holy Spirit keep up: and, we having life in Christ the root, the Holy Spirit communicates life every moment from the root to the branch; for our life is hid with Christ in God. And Christ says, *Because I live, you shall live also.* Hence the promise, *Their leaf shall be green, neither shall they cease from yielding fruit.* And no small part of the saint's fruit is put forth in
 God's

God's house of prayer, and by diligent attendance there—*The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright: He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.* Psalm xcii. 12, 13, 14, 15. In God's house of prayer the united fruits of the lips are offered up; such as, honest confessions of sins, and humble acknowledgments of mercies received. Prayers, supplications, and intercessions, are offered up in the unity of faith and love. God is extolled by the high praises of Zion, by thank-offerings, and by blessings, and the celebrations of the perfections and attributes of his nature; such as his mercy, goodness, truth and holiness, love, pity, and compassion, towards poor sinners in Christ Jesus—*Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I the Lord exercise righteousness, judgment, loving-kindness, and tender mercy in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.* Here the saints often have bowels of mercy drawn forth, and their hearts enlarged towards the poor of the flock, to relieve their wants—Those that are enriched by Christ Jesus come not behind in this grace also. Besides all these, there are internal fruits brought forth under the word of

God, which word is said to bring forth fruit. *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints; for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel: which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.* Col. i. 3—6. A word of reproof often produces self-loathing and self-abasement. A word of severity mixed with love produces humility and meekness. A word descriptive of the tried soul's case, attended with an increase of strength and encouragement, draws forth faith into lively act and exercise. A word of comfort draws forth love to God, and joy in him. A word that restores a backslider is attended with contrition and godly sorrow. A word that seals pardon to a fallen saint, fires his zeal, and arms him with indignation against both sin and self. A word of instruction that settles a doubting mind, or fixes a soul halting between two opinions, and which informs his judgment and discovers heresy and heretics, produces blessings and thanksgivings to the glory of God. A word that encourages and succours the tempted, excites love to Christ and hatred to Satan. A word that strengthens and refreshes the sincere seeker, produces patience, submission,

submission, and resignation to the will of God. And, though these are sometimes short and transient, yet they are genuine fruits, and such fruits as are produced under the influence of the Holy Ghost, who applies the word, and works with it, and by it.

All these, and many more such fruits, do the hearts of God's children conceive by the word, and under the operation of the Holy Spirit of God; which often fills their soul with pious grief, godly sorrow, or love to God, or self-loathing; so that they would be glad, could the discourse be stopped while they might retire into some lonely apartment to acknowledge his goodness, express their joys, or to pour out their souls before God; and are often grieved, when they go home, to find the blessed unction and the divine power abated, and the heavenly dew dried up.

There is a continual flowing of grace from the fountain to the holy city of Zion. The river of pleasure, that flows from the Fountain of life, sends forth its streams, which *make glad the city of God*; and Zion continually plays all her springs back again in devotion, worship, and adoration: hence the church is called *a spring shut up, a fountain sealed*. Shut up and sealed under sore trials; opened and unsealed in times of deliverance: shut up and sealed to all rivals and strangers; opened and unsealed to the Lord and to his friends.

At times, when the believer is under sore conflicts, and the Spirit begins to sanctify the trial, the divine flowings are wonderful, especially in prayer; matter and manner, words and power, are so abundant, that the soul is *as wine which hath no vent*; he is ready to burst, like new bottles. Job xxxii. 19. He has no sooner sent up the whole weight and sensations of his soul, but the heart conceives again, and he is constrained to *speak, that he may be refreshed*. Job xxxii. 20. But still the spring rises, till he can attend to nothing else. *For my love they are mine adversaries; but, I give myself unto prayer*. Psalm cix. 4. At such times the Spirit of grace and supplication operates in a wonderful manner; the believer, under the Spirit's influence, is more formidable than an army with banners; there is nothing in heaven, earth, or hell, that can stand against him, as may be seen in Hezekiah (Isaiah chap. xxxviii), and in Daniel (Dan. ix. 21); the former of whom drove back the sun in his firmament, and the latter fetched down an angel from heaven.

So, on the other hand, when the Holy Spirit furnishes the soul for praises and thank-offerings at the time of conspicuous deliverances from sore trials, temptations, or spiritual desertions, the soul is so banquetted, and the unction is so abundant, that the heart must pour it out — *Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest*

anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth over. Psal. xxiii. 5. While we are blessing God he keeps blessing us—*In blessing I will bless thee.* His love flows in, and we pour it out; the sacred flame burns, and the continual burnt-offering goes up. But the former and latter of these are upon our solemn feast days, and at the commencement of the years of jubilee; for, in the general, things are not so.

My son, think on these things, and follow after charity, righteousness, peace, faith, meekness, patience, with all them that call upon God out of a pure heart; while I remain, in the best of bonds,

Devotedly yours,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XV.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the new Vicarage,
Lewes, Sussex.*

To my joy, and the crown of my rejoicing.

BELOVED, when I finished my last I concluded that the cruse was nearly exhausted; but this morning early it sprung up again, and seemed to flow in various directions; it anointed my eyes, and I perceived it with this observation, *The yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.* I found it was so, and therefore I pursued it with pleasure, finding the service to be perfect freedom. *My horn is exalted like the horn of an unicorn,* and I am *anointed with fresh oil.* O, that this was a little more observed and attended to! But the believer is too much like the worldly miser, he never knows what he is worth. I must now *speake of the things which I have made touching the King,* and his anointing; and I hope it will turn out to thee that my heart hath been inditing a good matter. The matter is,

14. Concerning the judgment of the Holy Spirit. In the justification of our souls the Holy Spirit brings the righteousness of Christ near to us, and enlightens

enlightens the sinner to see Christ as the end of the law ; while he works faith in the heart to go forth, embrace him, and put him on : hence we are said to be justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. The Holy Spirit, by the ministry of the apostles, judging the twelve tribes of Israel ; he, by applying the words of reproof and rebuke to them, arraigned and brought in many guilty, who humbly craved forgiveness and obtained it ; when the blessed Spirit, who takes of the things that are Christ's and shews them to us, pointed these poor condemned sinners to the atonement and satisfaction of Christ, and to his righteousness and reconciliation with God by it ; and, upon their believing, he filled them with the flames of love and zeal ; and, sanctifying them, he set them apart, and devoted them as holy vessels of honour, meet for the Master's use. You have this work and these people thus described by the prophet—*In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem : when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.* Isa. iv. 2—4. Where this work is done there is a court of equity and justice

set up and established in the conscience of a believer, that he may no more call evil good, and good evil; nor put light for darkness, and darkness for light. The law is put into the heart, and written in the mind; or that which is equivalent to it. Faith being a persuasion in the mind, and the love of God (which love is the fulfilling of the law) in the heart; this, with the righteousness of Christ placed to our account, is called, by the apostle, *The righteousness of the law fulfilled in us, while we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* Now, to keep things in order in the breasts of all God's children, God sets up this court of equity and justice, that we may daily cite ourselves at it; and, upon every arraignment, *if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.* Our daily happiness depends upon our attention to this—*Herein do I exercise myself,* (says Paul) *to have a conscience void of offence; for blessed is the man that condemns not himself in the thing which he allows.* To this end God promises the Holy Spirit to guide and assist us in judgment—*In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people; and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment; and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.* Isa. xxviii. 5, 6. My brother, take notice of the personality of the Holy Spirit in that text; of the personal characters and incommunicable names ascribed to him, and of the train of
divine

divine perfections—the Lord of hosts; a crown of glory; a diadem of beauty; a spirit of judgment; and strength to them that turn the battle to the gate. I know the text may be accommodated to religious magistrates, and to persons in the church of Christ—judging them that are within: but these things are often done, and well done, even by men who know nothing savingly of the things which I am writing. The apostle, reprehending some of the church at Corinth for their unbecoming behaviour at the Lord's table, tells them that, *if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. Did the believer attend more to this when conscience reproaches or checks him, and go immediately to God by confession and prayer, disallow and disapprove of what he has done, and not suffer his sin to go either from mind or memory, but importune, and implore pardon and forgiveness; he would soon prevail, and save himself many a bitter cry and restless hour. The Corinthians omitted this, and therefore God took it in hand,—*For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* 1 Cor. xi. 30. David neglected this, till his soul got hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; till Nathan set him where he ought to have set himself; namely, on the judgment seat; and, by his wise parable, made him condemn himself, which he ought to have done before. These God judged

and chastened, that they might not be condemned with the world.

God not only keeps his court in the believer's heart, and the spirit of judgment there; but his house of correction also. God purges the daughter of Zion and Jerusalem by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning; hence he keeps his *fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem*. Isa. xxxi. 9. Those whom God judges he chastens; and this fire and furnace are to purge away the dross and tin. Many a time have I escaped that terrible furnace, by judging and condemning myself. And, though sometimes the process has continued for several days, yet I followed it up, and could not, would not rest, till pardon was obtained, conscience quieted, and peace restored; and sometimes this has been done even in the pulpit; there the word has come and healed me. Whereas some are in the furnace almost all the year round, they hardly ever make straight paths for their feet; but that which is lame is turned out of the way instead of being healed Heb. xii. 13. *From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, says God, will I cleanse you.* This he does at conversion. But dross and tin still remain, and the furnace is prepared for this—I *will purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin*. Isa. i. 25. The spirit of judgment, and the furnace of affliction, are continually at work in Zion. Cold and lifeless frames; ingratitude for mercies received; yielding to unbelief, and listening
to

to Satan; murmuring and rebelling at the daily cross; deadness in the service of God; being often self-willed and soon angry; speaking hastily and unadvisedly with our lips; indulging evil and unclean thoughts; being stubborn and sullen under the rod, with many slips and falls into sin. Hence the complaints—*Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love: thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead. My people are bent to backslide from me. Hezekiab rendered not again according to the kindness done unto him; nevertheless Hezekiab humbled himself for the pride of his heart.* 2 Chron. xxxii. 25, 26. Hezekiah judged and humbled himself, and so escaped the furnace—*Hezekiab humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiab.* Verse 26. If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged. Upon every sinful frame and miscarriage God calls us to the bar of equity—*Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Isa. i. 18. When these things are strictly attended to, a solid joy and lasting consolation is established in the soul. *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.* 2 Cor. i. 12. The testimony of conscience and the enjoyment

enjoyment of peace are inseparable; and by attending to these a man walks with God—*He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.* Mal. ii. 6.

Some indiscreet ones of the Lord's household are like some men who are embarked in several branches of business, and, being often cast down in their own minds, fearing they are going back, omit taking stock, lest a right knowledge of their affairs should sink them lower. But God will bring all his children to book; and, if they shun the bar of equity, he will bring them to the bar of judgment, and put fresh wrath and terror into the law, and hold up that hand-writing against them—*Enter not into judgment with thy servant,* says David. *Thou writest bitter things against me,* says Job. If we will not judge ourselves, the Lord will judge us; and, if we will not reason with him, he will make us hear the rod, and who hath appointed it; and then the question is, *Hast thou not procured these things to thyself?* Then into the furnace we go, kicking and plunging like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury and the rebuke of our God; and here he keeps us till we can say from the heart, *Not my will, but thine be done. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.* Micah vii. 9. By these means is the iniquity of Jacob purged, and this is all the fruit, to take
away

away his sin. Faith gets a fresh discovery of the atonement of Christ, and a fresh application of it by the Spirit. If this is not the case, we come out *like a fool brayed in a mortar*. It is not a deliverance from the furnace, but is intended to confound us, and to keep us in fear and suspense; doubting whether the furnace is not going to be heated hotter. When God takes us in hand, and judges and chastens us, we are sure of this furnace.—*I will bring them through the fire, and will purify them as silver is purified, and try them as gold is tried; and make a man more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir*. But my dear brother will say, “If all our dross and tin are to be taken away, how comes it to pass that so much still remain? *When I would do good, evil is always present with me*. No furnace that I have yet been in has ever removed the inbeing of it from me.” No; if the vessels of mercy were ever thus effectually and perfectly purged, there could be no more conscience of indwelling sin. But, the root that bears gall and wormwood still remaining, the furnace remains. I can find that the furnace purges me from my evil frames; but not from the inbeing of sin, which betrays me into these evil frames. Self is daily to be denied; the war between the law of the mind and that of the members remains, and is sure to be, more or less, directly or indirectly, the daily cross that a child of God has to take up. On account of these things the spirit of judgment remains in Zion. To subdue sin, and to keep
 grace

grace in the throne, is the cause of this fire and this furnace in Jerusalem. Self-examination is to the believer the business of every day; and every bill that conscience files against us is intended to bring us to the bar; and, upon trial, that which is disallowed, disapproved, bewailed, lamented over, and which is a cause of grief, and which makes us groan for deliverance, is no more we—*It is not I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* We are complete in him; without fault before the throne; and clean every whit, notwithstanding these things. And now, my dear brother, in observing these things—*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. And the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, amen.* So says yours, in the unity of the faith, and in the bond of love,

W. HUNTINGTON, S.S.

LETTER XVI.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

To the Son of my Vows.

BELOVED! *the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, even to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills; and they shall rest upon the head of my son, and upon the crown of the head of him that is separated from his brethren. But say you, Who shall ascend into this hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully; he, in whose eyes a vile person is-contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.*

A pure heart, is a heart purified by faith; for it is with the heart that man believes unto righteousness. Clean hands, are hands clean from bribes, and from dishonest gain, and from holding lies; and hands that are liberal to the poor of the flock—*Give alms of such things as ye have, and behold all things are clean unto you.* Such despise the heretic and hypocrite, but they will honour the faithful of the Lord's household.

But

But the utmost bounds of these everlasting hills are hard to describe; for who can describe the bounds or borders of the heavenly country! However, souls that have hope in their end shall come to the borders of it. This the scriptures witness—*Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel, weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy (the last enemy is death). And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border.* Jer. xxxi. 15—17. But I must pull in, or else I shall be carried I know not where. I shall now

15. Treat of mortification of sin by the Spirit. *For, if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but, if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* Rom. viii. 13. There is a great deal of mortification among the superstitious papists, pharisees, and legal workmongers; but it all stands for nothing, because it is not done through the Spirit; and, *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Besides, whipping, thumping the breast, walking bare-footed, fasting in Lent, abstaining from animal food, and confining themselves to fish, are human inventions; for *that which goes into a man defiles him not.* And fasting is left to our own option;

tion; the Son of man came eating and drinking. It is not the lawful use, but the abuse, of temporal mercies, which the scriptures condemn. Besides, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, are expressly called doctrines of devils.

1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

This work of mortifying the deeds of the body is called by different names in scripture. Our Lord calls it self-denial—*He that cometh after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

It is called putting off—*Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man.*

It is called a crucifying—*They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

- And it is likewise called mortifying the flesh—
- *Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth, and lie not one against another; seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds.* Col. iii. Here we have a description of the old man, and of the limbs or members of him; and a most formidable monster he is. Now there can be no putting this old man off, but by putting the new man on. Without the law of God in the mind there can be no war against the law in the members, and of course no daily cross. Where there is a renewed self that follows Christ in the regeneration,

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there

there will be a denying sinful self that hinders us in the way. The Holy Spirit raises up a new man in us, and then helps us to mortify the old man, that the new man may keep the throne—*Sin shall not have dominion; grace shall reign.* Every attempt to mortify sin without the Spirit and grace of God, is like the Æthiopian changing his skin, or the leopard his spots. Satan is not divided against himself. No superstitious modes of mortification, which are invented by Satan, will ever hurt his reign, or destroy his kingdom. Whipping may wound the back, going bare-foot may cripple the feet, and thumping the breast may make it sore. This is not only *neglecting the body* (Col. ii. 23), but abusing it; for the old man is still untouched, and of course unhurt. Such mortification is wickedness; for no man should hate his own flesh, but nourish and cherish it. Ephes. v. 29. The body is the workmanship of God, but sin is not. The body was very good till man let sin into it. They punish the poor body, but shew lenity to the old man—*These tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* Not the body, therefore, but the deeds of the body, the corruptions of our heart, are to be mortified through the Spirit.

i. The Spirit assists us in this work by testifying of Christ to the soul. Every time that faith is favoured with a fresh view of Christ, all grace is in exercise; faith looks and rejoices; love delights in the blessed object; hope abounds at the thoughts of future enjoyment; patience brings up the rear, in waiting

waiting till the change come; humility and meekness sink the soul into less than nothing, at the thoughts of a rebel being made heir to the inheritance of the saints in light. *Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* Eph. iv. 22, 24.

2. By helping our infirmities in prayer, God promises to subdue our iniquities—*He will turn again; he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* Micah vii. 19. In this way the Spirit helped Jabez—*And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, O that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me. And God granted him that which he requested.* 1 Chron. iv. 10. In this way Paul prevailed against his thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that was sent to buffet him.

3. The deeds of the body are mortified by our attending to, and delighting our souls in, the influences and operations of the Holy Spirit. When we follow after righteousness, peace, charity, meekness, patience, and faith, setting our minds upon them, and delighting our souls in these things, the old man gets neglected, and withers. *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.* Gal. v. 16.

4. By leading us to love and to delight ourselves in reading and meditating on the word of God. *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doth shall prosper.* Psalm i. 1—3. Here we are informed that this delightful work is intended to keep our leaf green, and to make us fruitful, like a tree that brings forth its fruit in due season.

5. The Spirit assists us in mortifying the deeds of the body by his quickening influences upon us, which keep up a keen appetite for spiritual food; such souls thirst for the living God, and long for the courts of the Lord's house; saying, *When shall I come and appear before God?* And such have their promise—*Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God: they shall be fat and flourishing, they shall bring forth fruit in old age, to shew that the Lord is upright.* A keen appetite and a heavenly banquet employ all the powers of the soul—I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. And, when Christ's fruits are so sweet and delightful to our taste, the devil cannot vend his wares; the old man, with his deceitful lusts, are rather despised and blown

blown upon than relished. This sorrowful meat is set before us when the better sort is withheld, when there is a famine and a compulsive fast. *Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.* Luke v. 34, 35. When these mournful days come, which are but too often, then Satan shews us all the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, and the imaginary happiness of his children, who war after the flesh. These are the days for sour grout, and for filling the belly with the east wind. But Satan never tells us who is to pay the reckoning, nor informs us about an eternal fast, and begging water in hell, when the Lamb and his wife will be bathing in endless pleasures in heaven.

6. The Spirit helps us in mortifying the deeds of the body, by exciting us to follow hard after Christ, and by encouraging us to cleave to him with full purpose of heart; to labour hard in order to our abiding sensibly in him, in his favour, in the light of his countenance, in the peace of him, and in the love of him; in the joy of the Lord, and in communion and fellowship with him; and by constant visits to him, and abounding in the work of him.—*I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered;*

and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. John xv. 5, 6. This is the most sure way to abound in fruitfulness; the more we commune with the Saviour, the more we savour of his good ointments, and the more we are equipped against Satan and his wiles. When, on the other hand, if this be neglected and not attended to, the branch gets at a distance, till sin, guilt, fear, and shame, stop up the intercourse, and then deadness and barrenness follow; leanness comes into the soul, the heart sinks, the countenance falls; spiritual gifts, abilities, zeal, apparent liveliness, diligence, and all joys, seem to blight under the fire of inbred lust; and all wither away together, unless the Spirit displays his power in such a soul.

7. The deeds of the body are not a little mortified by the fiery trial. When the old man, with his deceitful lusts, are ready to be too much for the believer, inasmuch as that the enjoyment of peace and common comforts are not sufficient to keep him, these are withdrawn; at which the soul is alarmed, fatherly anger lowers, fear and terrors follow up and flow in, and a spirit of heaviness succeeds. Doubts and fears about the goodness of our state lay us under great concern; God seems to be gone; every thing looks dismal; and the devil tempts the poor soul that he has no part nor lot in the better inheritance, &c. This sometimes crucifies the old man, with all his lusts and pleasures. This terrible remedy was applied to the incestuous Corinthian—*In the name*

of

of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. Many times, but in a less degree, and not for public scandal, but to mortify the sins of the flesh, which are too strong for the believer in prosperity, does the fiery trial come on, only to subdue his sin and to purge his dross.

These, my dearly beloved son, are some of the kind helps with which the holy and blessed Spirit of God doth assist the believer in mortifying the deeds of the body. And eternal life will most surely attend and succeed this long and lingering toil and labour, which God has given to the sons of men to be exercised therein. Adieu; grace and peace be with thee. 'Amen and amen,

Says thine affectionate father in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XVII.

To the Rev. J. JENKINS, Lewes, Sussex.

My dearly beloved Son,

I TOLD thee, in my last, that the blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; and that these blessings shall be upon the head of my son. And this shall come to pass *by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.* These blessings of heaven are the blessings that will bring us to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills—I will. *lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. Psalm cxxi. 1, 2. But who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart, &c. Psal. xv.* The best blessing in heaven is that of being filled with all the fulness of God; the best blessing that lieth under, is the
victory

victory Christ obtained over Satan, sin, death, and hell, by his own death and burial; the best of all breasts is the comforts of the Holy Ghost attending the gospel, called the sincere milk of the word; and the best womb is the promise of adoption and life, in which all the children of the promise lay. But I must proceed

16. To shew the sealing of the Holy Spirit. This is promised to all that are taught of God—*And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. Bind up the testimony, seal the law, among my disciples.* Isa. viii. 15, 16. But then what is the testimony?—It is the gospel. And what is the gospel?—The ministration of the Spirit. *But if the ministration of death was glorious, How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?* 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8. He, therefore, that receives the Spirit and is born again of him, receives our Lord's testimony or witness—*Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.* John iii. This doctrine Jesus spake; and adds, *We speak that we do know:* and this he testified—*We testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness.* This doctrine of the new birth,

birth, received in the experience of it, is emphatically called the testimony of Jesus. *And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.* Rev. xix. 10. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Hence it is plain that no man, in an unregenerate state, can be a prophet of the Lord, nor a minister of Christ, nor a testifier, nor a true witness; for he is destitute of the testimony of Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy. Christ sends the Spirit into our hearts, and he is the living testimony and the witness; and we are witnesses of what he does in us through Christ. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.* John xv. 26, 27. This is the testimony. The bond that binds the testimony is the bond of the covenant; and that bond is the everlasting love of God the Father, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. Rom. v. 5. Thus God's covenant, in which he promises that the word of life and the spirit of truth shall never depart from Christ nor from his seed, are received into the heart of God's elect, and are attended with the sweet blessing of God's eternal love to our souls.

Seal

Seal the law among my disciples. This law is not the moral law; for that was given by Moses, and which Christ came to fulfil: it is another law, that poor miserable sinners, who feel the plague of their heart, are commanded to wait for; for, as for the moral law, such sinners have got enough of that already, in their soul's cursing and condemning them; and, to encourage them, they are commanded to wait for another.—*Hearken unto me, my people! and give ear unto me, O my nation! for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near: my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people: the isles shall wait upon me, and on my arm shall they trust.* Isa. li. 4, 5. This law that goes forth is attended with salvation and righteousness; but neither salvation from sin, nor righteousness to justify, are obtained by the works of the moral law. The Lord's arm is to judge the people. It is *the arm of the Lord revealed* that makes a man believe the gospel report; and he that believes is saved with this salvation; and the righteousness of Christ is to and upon all them that believe: they are justified; and that is their judgment which begins at the house of God first. And this judgment of the people is to be a light to them in future; for every preacher, that contradicts or denies the justification of God's elect by faith, contradicts the gospel and the Spirit's work; therefore the Lord says, in the same chapter, *To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not ac-*
cording

according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Isa. viii. 20.

Thus, my dear brother, comes the arm of the Lord working faith. Salvation from sin, and justification from all things, attend believing. Such souls have taken their trial; their judgment is over; their cause is decided, and the decision is in their favour: they are pronounced just; and, of course, are passed from death to life, and shall not come into condemnation. John v. 24. On this arm of the Lord are we to trust, and to say, *In the Lord we have righteousness and strength.* Isa. xlv. 24. And this our judgment is to be our future light, to try preachers and their doctrines by; these are to be brought to this law, and to the testimony that we have received; and, if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them: and this is the judgment that we are to make of them. And how few preachers have we that can stand in this judgment, or in a congregation thus made righteous!

Upon believing we are to be sealed—*Seal the law among my disciples.* This law is the law of faith; the seal of God never attends the preaching of any other law—*This would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the preaching of faith?* Gal. iii. 2. Again, *He therefore that ministereth the Spirit and worketh miracles among you, doth he it by the works of the law, or by the bearing of faith?* Gal. iii. 5. Not by the law, for that worketh wrath; and all ministers of the law are dead

men—*We are not ministers of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*

The Holy Spirit of promise belongs to the new covenant, and he is the giver of the law of life—*The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Rom.

viii. 2. Believers in the Son of God, whose hearts are purified, and whose souls are justified; these, and no other, are ministers of the Spirit. No other, however gifted, can convey the golden oil, for that always flows through golden pipes. Zech. iv. 2. 12. Spiritual gifts, such as the gift of tongues, or that of working miracles, or that of prophecy, or that of understanding all mysteries, or of having all knowledge, or that of casting out devils, which is the best of all—are not the things that accompany salvation; men may have all these, and yet be nothing.

1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, all ye that work iniquity.*

Matt. vii. 22, 23. Balaam was a worker of iniquity when he prophesied, and so was Judas when he preached and wrought miracles; the love of money, the root of all evil, was in the heart of them both; nor did they ever love God, or seek his glory; they sought their own glory, and therefore they were not true men, nor was there any righteousness in them. Spiritual gifts have their seat only

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in the judgment and in the understanding; and the word of God never goes any deeper than into their judgment and their mouth—there they hold the truth, and it is in unrighteousness. Rom. i. 18. The nobler faculties of the soul are never touched by these gifts, nor does the soul reap any benefit from them. There is no divine power operating on the will, making them willing. He that God makes willing repents, and goes into the vineyard and does the will of his father. Nor is the conscience purged, nor the heart purified, by these things. There is no law written in the mind, nor any holy fire kindled in the affections, to raise them up to the right hand of God where Christ sitteth. If they have any confidence or peace; the former is only presumption, and the latter is kept up by the strong man armed, who remains in possession of his goods unmolested; and all their joys spring from the novelty of the doctrine, and from the operation of oratory on the natural passions. Many of these gifts were bestowed on graceless men in the apostolic age; to raise reports, to send out a sound into the world, to excite curiosity, and to draw people to hear the word, and be witnesses of the power of God; which terminated in the salvation of God's elect, and which was for a witness against others. Matt. xxiv. 14. But, when the elect of God were collected together, and churches formed and endowed with the Holy Ghost, then the year of jubilee was come, and these gifts returned again to the Prince of peace; as was foretold

foretold by the prophet; and the men that were endowed with them either went into the world, or into all manner of heresies, and so became the pests and foes of Zion; just as we see some people do now. *Thus saith the Lord God; If the prince give a gift to any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons; it shall be their possession by inheritance. But, if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince; but his inheritance shall be his sons for them.* Ezek. xlvi. 16, 17. Thus we see there is nothing secured to the servant when the year of jubilee comes; but the inheritance of the sons is richly secured. All which is punctually fulfilled by Christ—*Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Matt. xxv. 28—30.

But God writes the law of faith in the mind, and the law of love in the fleshly tables of the heart; and where these come, there the year of jubilee is proclaimed, and the law of liberty is published in the soul; and, to make all things sure and secure here, God sets the broad seal of heaven to the work. *In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit*

Spirit of promise. Eph. i. 13. Believers are living epistles, and as such they are sealed with an ever-living seal. Others may know these epistles and read them; but the choice contents, the mysteries, and the treasure, belong to God, and none else.

Seals are to keep things secret to the real proprietors, who can open them, read and delight themselves with the contents when they please, and seal them up again when they have done, and keep them close from all others—*A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.* Song iv. 12. The waters of this fountain are all sacred to the heavenly Bridegroom and his friends; when the Lord chooses that they should spring up in praise and thanksgiving to himself, or flow out to refresh his friends, they are opened, and will keep rising up and running over as long as this opening or enlargement lasts; and, when shut up and sealed, they always stop.

Sealing is to make things sure. So the Spirit seals the saints, that they may be sure that they belong to the elect of God. Assurance, therefore, attends the seal.—*Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you.* 1 Thess. i. 4, 5. Assurance, therefore, is to the believer one of the blessed effects of this seal; as it is written, *Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful*

ful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places. Isa. xxxii. 15—18.

The Jewish nation, called a fruitful field, was to be counted a forest; and the Gentile world, which formerly was called a wilderness, was to be turned into a fruitful field, under the out-pouring of the Spirit. Then judgment and righteousness were to remain in this field: peace, quietness, and assurance for ever, are to be the effects of judgment and righteousness. Their habitation is to be a peaceable one: and so it is, for they dwell in the cleft of the rock, that is their habitation—*Let the inhabitants of the rock sing; let them shout from the tops of the mountains.* Isa. xlii. 11. They are to have sure dwellings: and so they have, for they abide in the Son and in the Father—*Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.* Psal. xc. 1. And *he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* Psal. xci. 1. They are to have peaceable resting-places: they rest in the love of God, in his absolute choice of their persons, in his covenant, in the finished salvation of Christ, and in the Holy Spirit's work on their own souls; and I know of no resting-places so precious and so quiet as these.

Paul calls circumcision a seal. *And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised.* Rom. iv.

11. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness before ever he was circumcised, that neither he nor his seed might ever glory in the flesh. His circumcision is called no more than a sign of real circumcision; for a true circumcised person is one whose heart God circumcises, that he may love him with all the heart, and with all his soul, that he may live. Deut. xxx. 6. Such, and only such, are truly circumcised—*For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

Phil. iii. 3. The real seal of true and spiritual circumcision is *love*; and circumcision in the flesh was a sign of this, and no more. This seal in Abraham's heart, and the sign of it in his flesh, was to assure Abraham that God would adopt (by national adoption) his natural seed, and give unto them the land of promise; which he did; and led them into it by the hand of Moses and Joshua. And love was a seal to all Abraham's spiritual seed that he would adopt them by his grace, bless them with faith, righteousness, and life; and that he would give them the heavenly country, and bring them into it by that renowned seed Christ Jesus, in whom all nations should be blessed.

Almost every thing belonging to the believer is sealed; the foundation on which he builds is sealed.

Hymeneus

Hymeneus and Philetus, concerning the truth, have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19. I do not understand this passage as some good men do; that by *seal* here is meant the secret purpose of God, or his prescience. By this foundation the apostle undoubtedly means the Lord Jesus Christ; as it is written, *According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11. Now this foundation standeth sure; as the prophet Isaiah speaks, *Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.* Isa. xxviii. 16. From this text Paul takes it, and says, with the prophet, *Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* Now this foundation, which is Christ Jesus, has got the seal of God upon it. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.* John vi. 27. Christ was sealed with the Holy Spirit; he was distinguished, pointed out, authorised, anointed, commissioned,

and sent to be the promised and long looked-for Messiah. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb, and sealed by the public descent of the Holy Spirit upon him at his baptism, just before he entered on his public ministry. The miracles that he wrought, and the souls that he converted, were all scriptural evidences of his being sealed and sent of God. Hence the apostle concludes, that, though some, who profess the name of Christ, depart from the faith themselves, and overthrow the faith of others; yet the true Messiah, who is the omniscient God, and who, as man, is sealed with the Holy Ghost, must know who his own elect are; he must know whose sins he bore, for whom he died, and who are his own purchased possession: and surely he will never lose what his Father has given him, nor suffer any of those to be plucked out of his hand who are made his charge. The good shepherd may suffer Satan to steal away the wolves, but not the sheep; for the Lord (but none else) knoweth them that are his. Hence it appears that the believer's foundation is sealed, and so is the believer himself; and his sealing is said to be in Christ—*In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed.* Eph. i. 13. And thus God seals both the Saviour and the saved. *Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and bath anointed us, is God: who bath also sealed us.* 2 Cor. i. 21. Those, therefore, that are joined to the Lord are one spirit, for the seal of God is upon them both.

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The choice treasures of the covenant also, or the spiritual blessings of the New Testament, are all concealed and hid, under the same seal, from the eyes of all living; nor can any man ever get at them until the Spirit that seals the believer unseals the gospel, and leads the believing mind into it.—*The natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Cor. ii. 14. And the vision of all is become unto you as a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed. Therefore, says God, I will proceed to do a marvellous work, and a wonder among this people: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Isa. xxix. 11, 14. And this came to pass in the days of Christ—Father, I thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes: even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight. Matt. xi. 25.* How many times, before I was twelve months old from my second birth, have I seen men in a pulpit labouring in the dark to get into the treasure of an eminent text which lay hid under the seal, but all in vain. The sweet sense of pardon, of peace, of joy unspeakable and full of glory; the melting flames under a sense of eternal love; the sweet soul-dissolving sensations enjoyed under the divine flowings of godly sorrow and evangelical repentance, which are drawn forth under

the sounding of God's bowels towards us, and the repeated discoveries of his love to us in Christ Jesus; the heavenly sense and divine glee that springs up by the Spirit, under the impressions that attend the divine presence being about our path and about our bed; the sweet rays of divinity that often appear in the word, plowing up the deep mysteries, and leading the enlightened mind, by a glorious radiance, out of one mystery into another, establishing the soul in the glorious harmony that appears in the word; when crooked things are made straight, rough places plain, and apparent discords are made to harmonize; the delightful and soul-enriching thoughts of poor worms being indulged with access to God, and with boldness, freedom, and familiarity with him; and to hold communion and fellowship both with the Father and the Son; and, at the same time, to see the word of God tally with all the divine teaching, influences, and operations of the most Holy Spirit of God upon us; and to be sensibly under the divine smiles of heaven; to be acquainted with the private thoughts of God's heart, which are thoughts of good and not of evil, to give us an expected end! How many transient visits! how many transforming views! what sympathy does the God of all grace discover to us in trouble! what succour does he afford! what support does the heart feel in a trying hour! how sensibly does he rent the heavens and come down to our relief! Isa. lxiv. 1, He admits our hopes within the veil, and our affections

sections to his own right hand, where Christ sitteth. His blessed presence, when he shines upon the soul, casts a divine lustre upon the whole work of his hands; his brilliant perfections shine in both globes; *his glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.* Hab. iii. 3. The astonishing condescension of God, in stooping so low to visit us, makes us less than nothing. The distance and disproportion between God and such worms appear to be more, if possible, than infinite; and yet *charity*, that *believeth all things*, says, at the same time, and that with the witness on earth and the record of heaven, "I dwell in God, and God dwells in me." The divine hints dropped for faith to catch, the mysterious leadings of his providence, the goodness that passes daily before us, and the mercy and truth that follow us; the watchful eye of God upon us; the most minute circumstances which are so sensibly observed by him; the deaf ear that he turns to all our exclamations against ourselves; the divine approbation; the love, the paternal embraces, which are forced upon us, which we, when self-abased, coyly shun and try to put away, judging ourselves unworthy his elemency! These things, and thousands more, which my poor soul has enjoyed, and with which the word of God abounds, are all couched under the seal; which no natural man, however bright his parts, or however profound his learning, can touch, much less discover, and bring to the light. Natural men in the ministry are broken cisterns,

wells without water, clouds without rain, lamps without oil, and a cruse without salt. One dead discourse from a minister of the letter is sufficient to cast the most lively soul into a deep sleep, to lay the most enlarged saint in irons, and to make a watered garden like a barren heath. Spiritual lethargy, legal bondage, and soul-beggary, are all that ever I got from such ministers; and I have formerly had enough of this hard fare. They turn a house of prayer into a prison, and freeborn citizens into slaves.

The believer, as a living epistle, has all the contents of God's laws written upon his heart, sealed and kept secret from the world; for the men of the world can neither see them nor believe them, though he declares them. He is sealed with the assurance of faith, which fixes his heart. He is sealed with the love of God in Christ Jesus, which is his circumcision, and a sure sign and seal of the righteousness of Christ being his; for love casteth out fear, and believeth all things. Christ, his foundation, is sealed; the covenant, and all its rich contents, which are hid from the world, are sealed also, and made sure to him; but not concealed, nor hid from him.

Every wholesome truth, promise, or doctrine of Christ; every reproof or rebuke that gives instruction; together with all the cautions, warnings, and secret counsels, which are given by the great prophet of the church; are clothed with power, impressed upon

upon the soul, and fixed, as with a seal, upon his heart. *For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction; that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.* Job xxxiii. 14—16.

Without this sealing Satan and his heretics would soon steal away the word sown in the heart; as we often see in men of the greatest abilities, when the word is only received in the understanding and in the judgment. These are often seduced, and led to believe the greatest absurdities; and so would the elect themselves, were it not for the seal which attends the word. Truth, when sealed, makes the conscience free; and such souls set to their seal that God is true. Truth, then, reaches the affections; it is received in the love of it. It is the word of healing that makes us whole; the word of faith which makes us believe; the word of power which makes us obey; the word of wisdom which makes us wise unto salvation; the word of health which cures all our spiritual diseases, attended with the abundance of peace; a word of light to guide our feet into the way of peace. It is the word of righteousness which makes us just; and the word of reconciliation which makes us friends. It is the promise of adoption which makes us sons; the promise of life which makes us heirs; and the promise of victory through grace which makes us
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more than conquerors. All this, and much more, attends the sealing of our instruction. Hence the impossibility of the elect being finally deceived. Satan tries hard at the young believer, and sends the most wise and subtle servants in all his interest to do the same: but the young believer, just verged out of his bondage, and delighting himself in his liberty, and living upon little else but his divine comforts; and finding that these heretics bring nothing to his mind but confusion and bondage, which strip him of his sweet morsels; he soon begins to be afraid of them; he shuns them, and suspects them to be thieves and robbers: and he is quite right, for they are nothing else. And the Holy Spirit continues to revive and renew the work; this brings the soul again and again forth to the light. And every time the Lord shines into his heart the impostor is more and more discovered; while he feels his own heart the more strengthened, grounded, and settled in the truth.

By this seal the image of God is impressed; and this is done upon the soul by the Spirit, while Jesus Christ is exhibited to the enlightened understanding, and to the eye of faith: as it is written, *But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* 2 Cor. iii. 18. Various are the views that believers have of Christ Jesus while the Holy Spirit operates and makes this change, or impresses this image on the soul. Abraham,

ham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and Manoah, all saw him; for he appeared to each of these, and many more. Some saw him as an angel of the Lord, very terrible. Some in a human form, as Joshua; and in the clouds, as Job. Some as a flame of fire, as Moses. Some in suffering circumstances, as Isaiah. Others in his priestly habit, as Ezekiel and Daniel. Others in a war appearance, with garments dipped in blood, and upon a red horse, as John and Zechariah. Sometimes as the Ancient of days and venerable Judge, with his *hair like the pure wool*. Some upon his judgment-seat, as Daniel. And others upon his glorious throne as King of Zion, and above the cherubims, as Ezekiel. He was seen also of Paul; and since that by Mr. Hart, and by me also, and by many others in the present day, who have seen him in his own light by the eye of faith, and, with the enlightened understanding, as man in suffering circumstances upon the cross, and shining, at the same time, in the fountain of eternal light. O most precious, most wonderful, and soul-transforming view! Others see him in the light of the word. The word is attended with light and life. The Spirit testifies of Christ to the soul; at which time *the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings*; which vision is promised to all them that fear his name, Mal. iv. 2; and it is a promise of gospel times. And this is attended with joy unspeakable and full of glory.—*Arise, shine forth; for thy light is come,*

and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Isa. lx. 1, 3. Which promise will be fulfilled, and be found to be true, as long as there is a chosen vessel among the Gentiles to be called. And, although we have many preachers who deny all vision, and of course all supernatural light, yet we know that such cannot be burning and shining lights, because they deny the light; nor ministers of Christ; for he makes *his ministers a flaming fire.* Psalm civ. 4. Nor are they children of light, nor of the day; but of the night and of darkness; for, if what they assert be true, there is nothing but damnation in all the country: for God says, *Where there is no vision, the people perish.* Prov. xxix. 18. Such blind guides have nothing to guide them but the light of nature—*They speak a vision of their own heart.* Jer. xxiii. 16. To deny all vision is to deny God, who is light, and all knowledge of him. God promises ~~that~~ all his children shall know him; but how? God gives us the light of the knowledge of the glory of himself in the face of Jesus. It is to deny all the sure word of prophecy; for this is *a light shining in a dark place.* Such deny the title of the saints, and all the good work within; for they are called *the children of light, and children of the day.* They deny the path of the just, which shines more and more. They deny the salvation of God; for that is *a lamp that burneth.* They deny the lamp and the oil of the wise virgins; yea, and of the foolish

foolish too; for how could their lamps go out if they had no sort of light? They deny all joy to the righteous; for *the light of the righteous rejoiceth*. Such men deny the scriptures of truth; for they are *a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path*. They deny all preaching the gospel; for that is sowing *light for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*. They deny the being of God in his church; for *out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined*. It strips a real servant of God of every name God gives him. How can he be a *seer*, a *prophet*, or a *watchman*, if he be stone blind? How can he be a burning or a shining light, a flame of fire, a candle on a candlestick, or a star in the Lord's right hand, if there be no light in him? They must be blind watchmen and dumb dogs; for what dogs will bark unless they see a stranger, or hear a noise? And just such blind watchmen are all preachers who deny vision; for all supernatural light, which is above and beyond the light of nature, is vision; whether it shine into the heart, as in Paul, or into the head, as in Balaam; whether it shine in the word of God, or in the face of Jesus Christ. Paul calls his the heavenly vision. Such men deny the dexterity of Satan; for Paul says that he is transformed into an angel of light. Yea, more; such preachers even deny their own deception, and the influence that they are under; for Paul tells us that even impostors, or ministers
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of Satan, are *transformed as the ministers of righteousness*. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. In this account Satan aims to imitate an angel by his shining; and his servants to imitate the ministers of Christ by walking in the light of their own fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled.

The image of God, which the Spirit impreſſeth on the ſoul when it is ſealed, ſtands in light, knowledge, glory, love, righteouſneſs, and true holineſs. And ſuch ſouls ſhine as lights in the world, for they are converted; and real converſion is turning men *from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God*.

This ſealing us is ſaid to be unto the day of redemption. *Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are ſealed unto the day of redemption*. Eph. iv. 30. The day of redemption, here ſpoken of, appears to be the reſurreſtion, which is the redemption of the body from the grave. As it is written, *Ourselves alſo, which have the firſt-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourſelves groan within ourſelves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body*. Rom. viii. 23. Now our ſealing is the pledge and earneſt of this. *In whom alſo, after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with that Holy Spirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion*. Eph. i. 13, 14. In theſe words the church of God is called a poſſeſſion, as it is the Lord's portion.—*The Lord's*

Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. This portion is called the purchased possession, because it is bought with a price—*Feed the church of God; which he hath purchased with his own blood.* Acts xx. 28. The whole of this possession was given by the Father to Christ, and he laid down his life for it; and the price that he paid purchased the whole, body and soul: of all which he will lose nothing; no, not so much as a single hair—*There shall not an hair of your head perish. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.* John vi. 39, 40. This purchased possession is, at the present time, strangely scattered about. Many souls, called *the spirits of just men made perfect*, are now in heaven. Two of the bodies of the saints, as well as their souls, are in heaven also, even Enoch and Elijah. The bodies of thousands of the saints are now in the dust, which their souls in faith have left behind them to sleep in hope. Some part of the purchase is now in a militant state; another part lies in the ruins of the fall; some in the wombs of women; some in the loins of men; and some in non-existence. But, at the first resurrection, they must
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be all collected together; all whose names are written in heaven, the whole church of the first-born. And this will be the 'grand convocation, or *the general assembly*. Heb. xii. 23.

Now the apostle tells us that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit unto this day of redemption; which shews that none but sealed persons will rise in the resurrection of the just. None but those that are of faith, and who, upon thus believing, are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, can rise in the first resurrection; for they, and only they, are blessed and holy persons.—*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power.* Rev. xx. 6. Being of faith, they are blessed with faithful Abraham; and, being sealed with the Holy Spirit, they are holy. Hence this sealing us to the day of redemption is to assure us of a part and lot in this first resurrection; it is a pledge and an earnest of it. It is the Holy Spirit sanctifying and sealing of us that makes us meet to partake of it. And this is a truth, that the Holy Ghost never will quicken and change any one mortal body, and fashion it like unto the glorious body of Christ, unless he dwell in it, and make it his temple in this life.—*Know ye not* (saith the apostle) *that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost? Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them.* And this temple is holy; and

and, being blessed and holy, it must rise in the resurrection of the just ; and truly blessed and holy shall it be when it rises. Christ raised up the temple of his own body ; and the Holy Ghost will raise up the church, which is his temple, and fashion it like unto the glorious body of Christ. To these things, which are not seen, must we look. This, and what follows upon it, is the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. *So run that ye may obtain.*

In the path of the just that leads to life, and in this race that is set before us, and in hope of the prize, this leaves me—faint, yet pursuing.

Ever yours in undissembled love,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XVIII.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the new Vicarage,
Lewes, Sussex.*

To my own Son in the faith.

BELoved, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir up thy pure mind by way of remembrance, that after my decease these things may remain with thee. Meditate upon these weightier matters; give thyself wholly up unto them, that thy profiting may appear to all. *Do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry.* Bring them off from their old sandy bottom, from all trust in the flesh, and from their four lees of legal righteousness. Discharge truth in all its naked force and naked simplicity; and observe and watch its operations, its fruits and effects, and thou wilt find it sufficient, in the hand of the Spirit, to subdue the most stubborn, to change the most obdurate, to silence a gainsayer, and to furnish the man of God for every good word and work. But I shall proceed,

16. To treat of the Holy Spirit as an *earnest* of the inheritance. *For we that are in this tabernacle*
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do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 2 Cor. v. 4, 5. The apostle here calls our earthly bodies a *tabernacle*; which is a portable dwelling, set up, taken down, and removed, just as it pleaseth the owner of it to do. This tabernacle, as it now stands, is not to continue, because of the misery which attends the inhabitants of it in its present state—*We that are in it do groan, being burdened.* There is in it the plague of leprosy, and therefore it must be pulled down. There is a body of sin, a body of death in it; and this has made it corruptible, and corruption is the seed of death—*It is appointed unto all men once to die;* God has made it *subject to this vanity, not willingly;* for death, abstractedly considered, is not welcome to us—but God hath *subjected it in hope.* Death, disarmed of its sting, which is sin; and of the strength of sin, which is the law; and of the curse of the law, which is wrath and damnation; all which attend death as a penal evil: death, being disarmed of these, it is not death, nor the king of terrors; but the shadow of death, and the gate to life; for all things are ours, *whether life, or death, or things present, or things to come.* 1 Cor. iii. 22.

2. The apostle calls these our earthly bodies *clothes*, which a man puts on in the morning. So we come into this world with these corruptible bodies; and, as a man puts off his clothes at night and goes to

bed, so there is a night coming on (in which no man can work) for the Lord's servants, when they shall be paid; they who labour under the cross, in faith and love, and in self-denial, at which time they will put off their clothes, go to rest, or fall asleep in Jesus. But this is not all that hope is conversant about.—*Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.* In the resurrection morning, when the marriage of the Lamb is to be consummated, these bodies of ours shall not only be put on again upon our souls, but these corruptible bodies themselves *shall put on incorruption, and these mortal bodies shall put on immortality*; and this is to be done *when he who only hath immortality shall appear.* This will be the finishing stroke to the new creation, and is the last transforming view that we are looking for.—*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* Tit. ii. 13. We have already put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have walked in him; namely, by putting on his righteousness, the garments of salvation, and the covering of the Lord's Spirit. But at this time we shall put him on with a witness, and that for good and all. The Holy Spirit will quicken our mortal bodies, and infuse divine life throughout every member of them, *when Christ, who is our life, shall appear.* The Spirit will purge away, not only all our sins, which is called *changing our vile bodies*, Phil. iii. 21; but will eradicate

eradicate all corruptible matter, for incorruption shall be put on. We shall then *know the love of Christ which* (in this state) *passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God.* Eph. iii. 19. The church is Christ's body, the fulness of him, all dwelling in him; and he will fill them all, be all fulness to them, and be all in them. Eph. i. 23. Our bodies will not only be purged from all their gross and corruptible matter, which is now a clog and a weight, but they shall be spiritual—*There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.* This dead weight shall give place to an *eternal weight of glory.* 2 Cor. iv. 17. It shall be raised in power; power to bear this eternal weight of glory, and power to bear the sight of seeing God the Father; for *the pure in heart shall see God.* Matt. v. 8. *In that day I shall shew you plainly of the Father.* In this power the body will be a fit companion for the soul; it will be vigorous, alert, and, for its agility, *as the angels of God in heaven.* Matt. xxii. 30. Hence, in the delightful service of God there will be no fainting, no weariness, though we shall *sing salvation to God and the Lamb for ever and ever.* Rev. v. 13.

We are to be led by the Lamb to the fountain of living waters, Rev. vii. 17; and, the soul and body both being spiritual, we shall *drink of the river of God's pleasure,* Psalm xxxvi. 8; which will fill us with divine fulness as fast as we can pour it forth in blessings, praises, and thanksgivings; together with the ascriptions of *power, and riches, and wis-*

dom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing,
to God and the Lamb. Rev. v. 12.

Our bodies will be raised in glory. I think our bodies will be fiery, or have a fiery appearance. Which may be gathered from the following passages—*Our bodies* (says Paul) *are to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.* *We* (says John) *shall be like him; we shall awake with his likeness.* And the glorified humanity of Christ is thus described—*And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it; from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.* Ezek. i. 27. Divine light will shine through them with such a radiance of celestial glory as will equal, and in many things exceed, all the luminaries of heaven. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.* Matt. xiii. 43.

At this time also, and at the consummation of the marriage of the Lamb, the spouse will be *perfumed with all the powders of the merchant.* Song iii. 6. *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.* Isa. xxvi. 19. The odour of the Lord's sacrifice, with which the church will be perfected, the sweet favour of her glorifying grace with which she will be adorned, will be wonderful. All her Lord's garments *smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the*
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the ivory palaces. Pſal. xlv. 8. And this divine fragrance will be ſpread all over her—*We are a ſweet ſavour unto God now,* 2 Cor. ii. 16; but how much more then?

All the prieſts that attended in the holy place, near the holy of holies, were perfumed. Exod. xxx. 35, 37; much more ſo in the holy of holies, eternal in the heavens. Sanctifying grace makes the church a *bed of ſpices* now, Song vi. 2; then what will glorifying grace do? Prayers in the hearts of believers are *golden vials full of odours*, Rev. v. 8; but perfect praises in heaven muſt exceed them. As perfumed, God accepts us in his dear Son in this life; and in Chriſt we ſhall ever remain a ſweet ſavour. *I will accept you with your ſweet ſavour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries.* Ezek. xx. 41. *Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in duſt: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead.* Iſaiah xxvi. 19.

We have reaſon to believe that Adam was very handſome, as he was *the figure of him that was to come*, Rom. v. 14; who is ſaid to be *fairer than the children of men*, Pſalm xlv. 2. It is ſaid of David, that *he was ruddy, of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to; prudent in matters, and a comely perſon, and that the Lord was with him.* 1 Sam. xvi. 12, 18. And no doubt but Chriſt was much like him in perſon. All defects and deformity came into the world with and by ſin; and, when this evil cauſe

is removed, the disagreeable effects will cease.—*He that is perfect shall be as his master.* Luke vi. 40.

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Eph. v. 27.

All superfluity, deformity, or deficiency, rendered a Levite under the law unfit for the priesthood, or service of the sanctuary; nor will it be admitted in the true tabernacle above. There will be no spot of sin, no wrinkle of old age, nor the scar of old wounds, nor any such thing as deformity.—Leah will appear without tender eyes, Jacob without halting, and Paul without deformity or temptation, and Timothy without his bilious complaint. The church shall be *perfect in one*, John xvii. 23; and no imperfection can stand before God. Christ was a lamb without blemish and without spot, and *we shall be like him, and see him as he is.*

There will be a perfection of sight. The remains of the old vail hangs heavy upon us in this state; it is a darkness that is often felt; the dismal gloom upon the mind keeps us from looking to the end of things, and from seeing them as they really are—*We look through a glass darkly*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, and see by the mirror of faith. Faith is the visive faculty of the heaven-born soul, which, like the moon, borrows all her light from the sun; for, if the Sun of righteousness shine not, if the Lord's countenance be not lifted up, we are walking in darkness, and have no light; we can only trust in

the name of the Lord in the dark, and stay ourselves upon an absent God—*With thee is the fountain of light: in thy light shall we see light.* Psalm xxxvi. 9. *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But, when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10, 12. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* Matt. v. 8. And this sweet sight in the face of Jesus Christ is the ultimate end of hope, the fulness of expectation, and the superabounding banquet of all holy and heavenly desires, which shall fill them even to satiety. There we shall see face to face, and know as we are known.

We shall see poor Adam and Eve, our first parents, to whom the first promise was revealed; and Abel, the protomartyr, the first victim to satanic rage and cruelty; and Noah, the second stock, the first ship-builder and navigator, who went a twelvemonth's voyage in a sea without a shore; and the venerable Abraham and Sarah, our mystic parents, whose bodies for many years were so barren, and their faith so fruitful, as even to conceive and enjoy many nations at once. There we shall see Isaac, the grand type and figure of the mystic birth of all the promised seed; and Jacob the mighty wrestler, who overcame both heaven and earth when he had but one leg to stand upon. There will be poor peevish Jonah, well-pleased,

pleased, and delighting himself in his God, after maintaining a strong contest with him both by sea and land. There we shall see Melchizedek, who is set before us as an evangelical priest, a worshipper of God in the Spirit, and who, with respect to genealogy, has neither father nor mother, birth nor death. There we shall see Peter, without his sword, among the faithful confessors; Mary Magdalen among the wise virgins, and David among the company that were not defiled with women; Paul, also, that unparalleled champion and indefatigable labourer; John the beloved disciple; Mary, also, who anointed the Lord; the blessed mother of the second Adam; and Lazarus, who, though raised a second time, yet is a sharer in the first resurrection.

Adam knew Eve and her origin as soon as she was brought to him; Peter and John knew Moses and Elias though in a glorified state: but knowledge in heaven will be perfect, and therefore far exceed all attainments in this life.

There will likewise be an end for ever to all grief and sorrow, and to all the causes of them. *What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more,*

more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev. vii. 13—17.

These happy creatures came out of great tribulation; all sorts of trials, troubles, temptations, and persecutions; which is the common lot of all God's family. The robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb were their bodies, with which their souls were clothed. Their happiness is, that God dwells among them; that they are before his throne, and engaged in his continual service, being filled with love to him and delight in him.

They hunger no more after righteousness, after life, nor after the word, being perfectly filled. They thirst no more after comfort, after the new wine of the kingdom, nor after the living God, being filled with all his fulness. Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. The sun of persecution and temptation, which comes because of the word, and which offends and withers so many unsound professors, shall smite them no more, nor any heat. Not the fiery darts of Satan, nor the fire of lust, nor a fiery law, nor the flames of spiritual and carnal jealousy, nor the wrath and rage of cruel men; for the Lamb in the midst of the throne shall feed them with his fulness of glory, and lead them to living fountains of waters; namely, to God the Father; saying, *Behold me and the children which God hath given me. Heb. ii. 13.* And God, Father, Son,

Son, and Spirit, are the living fountains of living waters; the fountain of life, love, joy, peace, goodness, glory, and majesty. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, being presented unto the Father by Christ; and, being cordially accepted, embraced, and blessed by him, all fear, sorrow, and grief, and the causes of them, must be for ever banished, and of course all fears and tears about failing of his grace, coming short of the promised rest, and all dread about an eternal separation from him, are for ever wiped away. And so it must be; *for there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.* Rev. xxii. 3, 4. These, my dearly beloved son, are some of the things which we have in view.—*Faith is the substance of these things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.*

Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 2 Cor. v. 5. God hath loved us, chosen us in Christ, ordained us to life by him, pre-adopted us, and predestinated us to future sonship and heirship, and to the enjoyment of this inheritance—that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory. Rom. ix. 23.

He hath also reconciled us and redeemed us by Christ; he hath called us, quickened us, justified

us, and sanctified us, regenerated and renewed us, tried and purged us; giving us faith, the substance of these things and the evidence of them, and begotten us to a lively hope and expectation of them; and has given us the seal of secrecy, the seal of surety, the seal of ratification and confirmation; and led us to subscribe to the seal with the hand of faith, which has felt them; and to set our hearty amen to these things, and our acquiescence with God in them, and in which we believe and confess that God is true. And, to make things sure to all the seed, he hath given us the earnest of the Spirit.

This earnest of the Spirit is likewise called *the first-fruits of the Spirit*. Rom. viii. 23. The end of the world is called the harvest, when the angels will reap the world and gather in the elect of God, and those who have sown to the Spirit in this life *shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting*. Glory in heaven is the great and grand harvest, when the master and Lord of the harvest will gird himself and come forth and serve the reapers, Luke xii. 37; *when he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together*. John iv. 36.

Now, by the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the first-fruits of this blessed harvest are produced.

Christ is clearly seen by the enlightened understanding and by the eye of faith; and this is an earnest to us that we shall be like him, and see him as he is.

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We see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; and this is an earnest to us, that all that are pure in heart shall see God.

Faith, which the Spirit produces, is the substance of things hoped for. To be found in Christ, and in his righteousness, is what we have in hope, and faith is the substance of this;—for Christ, the object of faith, dwells in the heart of all believers.

Faith is the evidence of things not seen: it is a clear and perfect proof both of our sonship and heirship.—We are all (manifestly) the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; and, if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

Faith is an undoubted certainty which silences all misgivings of heart; it is assurance itself, that persuades the mind, and stays it on the object believed in; it discovers future things to the believer, brings them near, and embraces them, and realizes them to the soul.

It believes in divine life, and applies it; it believes in atoning blood, and purifies the heart by it; it believes in an imputed righteousness, and puts it on; it believes in the promised comforts of the Spirit; and *we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

It believes in the love of God, and receives it in the enjoyment of it, and works by it both to God and to his children. And what shall I say more to my son? for time would fail me to tell of half that I have felt.

Heaven

Heaven is a place of rest; and we, that believe do enter into rest.

Heaven is a place of peace; and, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

With joy and rejoicing shall the church be brought to Christ, and shall enter into the king's palace; and God fills us now with joy and peace in believing.

Heaven is a place of endless day; and the path of a just man, who lives by faith, shines more and more till that perfect day takes place.

The gift of God promised in heaven is eternal life; and *he that believeth hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation.*

The inheritance above is endless glory; and even this begins in this life.—*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of God is risen upon thee.* This fills the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

All these, my beloved son, are the foretastes of eternal fulness, the streams of grace (which make glad the city) flowing from the river of divine pleasure, the head of which is God, the fountain of life; for unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. Eccl. i. 7.

All these worketh the Holy Spirit of God through Christ the mediator, from whose fulness all grace is communicated to us, and through whom all grace flows back again, even to its own proper fountain.

What rich security is this, that the heirs of promise

mise might have a strong consolation! God, with his own finger, writes his laws on the fleshy tables of our hearts, and puts them into our minds. He binds up the testimony in the bond of love to us; then he seals the law among his disciples with a comfortable assurance; yea, more, the Spirit himself is the seal. He is the divine impress of heaven, he stamps the divine image upon us, he affixes the truth and power of it, he makes and maintains a melting impression on the soul, he confirms and establishes the heart, he is the attestation and the ratification of all to us. In his quickening, enlivening, enlarging, and cheering operations, he is the pledge of the first resurrection. In his operations of love, joy, light, and comfort, he is the first-fruits of the glorious harvest; and in all these the earnest of the future inheritance. Well may Paul say, *It is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.*

Matters thus settled between Father, Son, and Spirit; revealed and made known, ratified and confirmed, by the triune God to his chosen and beloved family; testified by God's hand-writing upon our hearts, sealed with the broad seal of heaven, and a pledge and earnest given: O this stands faster than mountains of brass! O the immutability of his counsel, the stability of his covenant, the security and safety of the blessed inheritance!

An earnest differs nothing from the whole lump
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in quality, only in quantity. The first-fruits are the same as all the rest of the harvest, only they are a very small part of an abundant crop : whether, therefore, we glean a handful (like Ruth) or reap a sheaf (like Joseph in his dream) it will at last terminate in a barnful.—*Gather the wheat into my barn.* Matt. xiii.

30. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be all glory, might, majesty, dominion, and power, both now and for ever. So be it, so be it; says*

The chiefest of all sinners,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER XIX.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the new Vicarage,
Lewes, Sussex.*

*Dearly beloved and longed-for, my joy, and the crown
of my rejoicing; stand fast in the Lord, my dearly
beloved.*

METHINKS I hear thee crying out, *Hast thou but one blessing, O my Father?* Yes, my son, I have many blessings. I have as many spiritual and temporal blessings from my God, and as many curses from hypocrites in Zion, as most men living; and the latter is the consequence of the discriminating effects of the former.—*Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.* Psalm cix. 28. I shall now proceed,

17. To take notice of the different distributions and influences of the Holy Spirit. *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations [or ministrics], but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* 1 Cor. xii. 4—6. You see here the different divine names which

which the Holy Ghost takes to himself. In the distribution of his gifts he styles himself the Spirit; in his different ministries, the Lord; and in his different operations he styles himself God.

Now these his ministerial gifts the holy apostle mentions—*To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.* 1 Cor. 8—10. There is nothing in all these gifts that will infallibly assure or secure everlasting life in heaven to the recipients of them. The kingdom of God stands not in word; neither in the word of wisdom, nor in the word of knowledge. We see many wise enough in the word that were never made wise unto salvation, or who never had the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins; and therefore, however wise they may be in the word, they are ignorant of their own hearts, and of the all-conquering grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Nor doth the word of knowledge, or the greatest gifts of knowledge in the word, secure the heavenly inheritance. *Knowledge puffeth up.* Satan knows more of God, of the works of creation, of the efficacy of divine grace in sinners' hearts, by his being so often cast out by it; yea, and of the scriptures of truth, the glories of heaven, and of the pains of hell; than

all the natural men in the world, put them all together; and yet the weakest believer in all the church of God knows more than he. Men may have all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, and yet be nothing. 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

Nor is the faith here spoken of that faith which purifies the heart and works by love; but miraculous faith, or the faith of miracles; which many have had to whose heart it never applied the atonement, nor put on an imputed righteousness; nor did it ever embrace the Son of God, much less bring him into the heart, and give him a dwelling-place there. It is like a faith upon sight, which many had, who, *when they saw his miracles, believed.* It is temporary, and for a time—*these for a while believe, and then fall away.* This faith has its seat in the judgment and understanding, but not in the heart. It deals with the power of God in its operations, but not with the loving-kindness and tender mercy of God in Christ Jesus. And this power is put forth in working miracles on others, when it does nothing towards the salvation of the possessor of it. And, as it deals not with the loving-kindness and tender mercy of God in Christ, it is nothing in the grand business of salvation; for, *though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.* 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

Nor is there any salvation in the gifts of healing; such as healing the sick, the lame, the blind, the leper, or the lunatic, by casting out devils. *Many*
will

will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matt. vii. 22, 23.

Nor is the gift of tongues, or the interpretation of them, any of the things which accompany salvation. This gift has its seat only in the understanding and judgment, and is played off from the tongue; but never reaches the heart nor the affections. Though some value themselves very much upon these things, yet no man will affirm that either Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, can purge the conscience of a guilty and filthy sinner. *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.* 1 Cor. xiii. 1. All these things have a tendency to lift men up; unless by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and by his humbling operations, they are counterbalanced, as they were in Paul and others.—*It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.* Heb. xiii. 9.

There are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. The Lord the Spirit administers not only different gifts to men, but grace; he administers strength to the weak in faith, increaseth it in them that have no might, making their strength equal to their day. He administers the word to the preachers of it, and light to see into it; wisdom rightly to divide it; boldness to declare it faithfully, without

fearing the face of any; zeal in the delivery of it, with lively frames to set off the sweetness and excellency of it, and power to enforce it; and that with the greatest confidence, from an inward testimony of interest in it. And, without this divine influence of the Spirit, the pulpit would be little better than a pillory, and the work of the ministry quite a slavery; as we see in too many who are obliged to have recourse to country tales and old wives' fables, in order to fill up the time; or else to set up some supposed rival as a scare-bird, and call him an Antinomian, and so belabour him, just to help out; which is done for want of matter, and for want of the divine aid of the Holy Spirit. To these men I have contributed not a little, in thus helping them out at a dead lift.

The Holy Spirit administers different power and authority to men; furnishing some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some evangelists, some teachers, and some to be helps; enabling each in his place to be of some use to the body, the church; that the whole, by the joints of one faith, and of one and the same judgment, and by the bands of love and peace, may be bound together; and that the whole body, holding fast the head, may have nourishment communicated from the head of influence (by the Spirit) to every part of the body; so knitting it together that it may increase in grace and in number with the increase of God. See Col. ii. 19. Every one of these different gifts are of use in the
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mystical body, when each, with diligence and affection, fills his place. For, as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion [or analogy] of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Rom. xii. 4—9. Thus doth the Holy Spirit administer different gifts and abilities, and assign men to different work in the church of God, to edify the body, and to keep it together, that there should be no schism in the body, or no renting and dividing the affections of one member from another. And each of these is useful in his place; so that *the hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee; nor the foot to the hand, I have no need of thee.* Now, as there are differences of administrations, but all these by the same Lord the Spirit, so there are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 1 Cor. xii. 6.

The divine operations here spoken of are not those which are put forth in persons on whom miracles are wrought; for these, in the general, are

only displays of divine power ; but the operations of the Spirit in the souls of God's chosen are divers. And the infusing of grace into us, in forming the new man in us, and in keeping and preserving him when formed, requires divers operations. Though the new man, the whole work of grace, is produced at once, at the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the heart; (he comes as a spirit of all grace, and a spirit of all supplications); yet it is not perceptible to us but by degrees; nor do I suppose it was, either to the thief upon the cross, who died almost as soon as the new man was formed, nor to the child of Jeroboam, though the work was complete in them both. The first thing that we discover of it is light; this was the first thing that appeared in the old creation, and so it is in the new. And even this entitles us to sonship, though we cannot claim it; such are children of light, and God is the father of lights.

The next thing that is felt is life; and, when this quickening influence is spread through the soul, a mighty famine ensues; we cannot feed upon our former lusts and pleasures; these sweet morsels become bitter, and our former glory in the pleasures of sin becomes our shame. The famine increasing upon us, and former gratifications becoming nauseous, to work we go to get some entertainment (or satisfaction) from our own performances, and labour hard to fill our belly with these husks which the swine can eat; but the poor hungry soul can find no satisfaction in these. However, there is now and

then some strange emotions within, and some softening sensations felt; some flying tidings are brought to the mind by the sudden occurrences of different passages of scripture; and often transient beams of light, attended with a sense of soul-dissolving love; but their influences are so sudden, that they are gone before we can hardly relish them, which makes the appetite the keener.

But, when the Holy Spirit discovers Christ to us with all his finished work, and leads the soul forth in faith to embrace and solace itself in his dying love, the new creature comes forth with all its beauty. But we are so taken up with the love and excellency of Christ, and with the unspeakable joys and consolations of the Holy Spirit, that we know but little of the new man; though this would be the only time to observe him, when he is so lively, and the old man appears to be quite banished. But nothing of this can be attended to till spiritual desertions make us doubt and fear; and then matters are examined and sifted over, in order to support and arm ourselves against the attacks of Satan. The sad struggles of the old man, also, make us watch and seek, in order to find out the new one; but it is hard to describe him—the head of the new man is knowledge; he is renewed in this, Col. iii. 10.

His eyes are the illuminating anointings of the Holy Spirit giving us an understanding. Rev. iii. 18. 1 John ii. 27. Without this he sees nothing.

The hands of him are faith and the assurance of it;

it; with these he holds fast, and will not let go. Song iii. 4. Gen. xxxii. 26.

His feet are the actings of faith under the influence of the Spirit; if these are continued he can walk, either upon the waves of the sea, or upon the dry land; but, if these fail, he either halts or sinks; and, whichever it be, in he goes; nor will he venture out again unless the sun shine: either mercy, love, or divine power, must influence him and draw him, before he will attempt to stir abroad again. *We walk by faith and feeling, not by sight.* 2 Cor. v. 7. I say by feeling: for faith stands in the power of God, and it moves in the same; for we are kept up, and kept on, by the power of God through faith; and without this power there is no walking safely.—*Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.* Psalm cxix. 117.

Righteousness is the robe of this new man, and true holiness his glorious adorning.—*And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* Eph. iv. 24. This new man, that I am speaking of, is of divine origin, and of heavenly extraction; he is born of the most Holy Spirit of God.—*That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* John iii. 6. This principle of grace, which is called the new man, and is promised in the Old Testament under the names of *a new heart and a new spirit*, is that which Peter alludes to when he says, *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of*

of the divine nature. 2 Peter i. 4. The apostle says that this new man is created after the image of him that created him; and therefore it is a creature, and a very holy creature, being created in righteousness.

The heart of this new man is love, for love influences every member of him; hence we are exhorted to *put on charity, the bond of all perfectness*, Col. iii. 14; which is the same as to put on the new man. Now, as love is the fulfilling of the law, both the first and the second table; yea, and the gospel too, for *charity believeth all things*; the apostle says that this new man is created in righteousness; the heart of this new man being love, and love fulfilling both the law and the prophets, love is the righteousness of this new man.

Moreover, as one member of this new man is faith, so of course this new man must believe also. Observe the following text.—*But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.* Rom. xxi. 26. Observe here, it is not called the obedience of men, nor is it called our obedience by faith, or obedience in faith, though this may be true; but the obeyer there spoken of is faith itself; it is the obedience of faith, and this is the obedience of the new man; and, of course, he is treated in righteousness, having both faith and love, which fulfil both the laws

laws of faith and of works, and therefore there is no unrighteousness in this new man. And this is a truth, that, as in the justification of our persons the righteousness of Christ is imputed, so in the sanctification of our souls there is a righteous nature imparted. He is created in true holiness in opposition to all ceremonial, negative, spurious, counterfeit, or hypocritical holiness, which is nothing but an outward shew in the flesh.

Every member of this new man is holy, there is real holiness in every part of him; every grace produced in the soul under the operations of the Holy Spirit is holy; hence this new man is called the holiness of God.—*God chastens us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.* Heb. xii. 9. That is, after our chastisements are over, which are intended to humble us, God giveth us more grace; for he resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. James iv. 6. Hence trials make this grace shine the brighter, and appear the more conspicuous; for these are intended to weaken and subdue our inbred corruptions, which lust against the Spirit.

The ornaments of this new man, or that with which he is decked, especially when the believer puts them on and appears at court, are meekness and quietude.—*Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of*

of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4. These ornaments are said to be incorruptible. Meekness is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 23), and exercises itself upon God, after we have been under his chastening hand and are humbled, and the affliction begins to be sanctified to us. These ornaments are worn for many days together at the soul's first espousal to Christ; and are generally continued, more or less, as long as the wedding lasts and the bridegroom continues to discover his dying love to the bride.—*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.* Isaiah lxi. 10. Thus we see that the church ascribes all her attire and her divine decorations to her Lord; he provided both her wedding suit and her heavenly trinkets. He hath clothed us, he hath covered us, and adorned us like a bride with her jewels. Meekness is generally put on upon every undeserved visit that the Lord pays us, especially when he restores our souls from our backslidings, or reclaims us from our misdoings, or appears in our behalf in times of trouble, or when he gives us a fresh sight and sense of our interest after some sad days of doubting and fearing. Nay, we never think ourselves, on such occasions, properly dressed without these jewels; these

these generally attend the kisses that make all up; for they are a satisfactory proof to us of the renewals of love.

Moreover, sore trials contract the heart; and under these contractions a load of grief is conceived, and the heart gets full, and must have vent. Under such circumstances, if legal bondage and a sense of wrath operate, these beget slavish fear; at such times the lips often ease the heart by muttering perverseness, which only hardens and makes the breach wider: but, when meekness operates, all the ashes are poured out at the foot of the altar.

The other jewel is quietness; this springs from fulness, and all fulness of satisfaction in us is according to faith—*In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.* Faith puts on a perfect and an all-sufficient righteousness, and fills the soul with joy and peace in believing in it.—*The effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance for ever.* Isa. xxxii. 17 And the stronger faith is, the more solid the joy; full assurance of faith is fulness of satisfaction; and full satisfaction produces quietude, and sets us down with contentment, thankful for what we have, and envying none.

But this jewel is only worn by the bride whilst she abides with her bridegroom.—*My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.* Isa. xxxii. 18. Our quiet resting-places are in the electing love of God the Father, the finished salvation of Christ, and in the
work

work and witness of the Holy Ghost. The soul that is ignorant of these, *is like the troubled sea which cannot rest.* But my brother will say, Can the Holy Trinity, with any degree of propriety, be called a place and a resting-place? Yes—*Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.* Psalm xc. 1. And I know of no rest nor resting-places for weary souls but these.

The bowels of this new man are described by the apostle; for, whenever the old man is put off and the new man is put on, some of the following things appear—*Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.* Col. iii. 12.

Bowels of mercies are exercised chiefly towards the children of God in trouble, and flow from the influence of love and sympathy; and are only exercised by those who know what soul-distresses are. Kindness is a grace that springs from tenderness, and tenderness springs from love. Souls quickened by the Spirit have keen sensations and tender feelings, which a child of God in distress will easily touch; for grace in one soul claims kindred with grace in another, and will move in consort with it. If one subject of grace suffer, the other suffers; if one be honoured, the other will rejoice; the motions of it will make us weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that do rejoice. This humbleness of mind, long-suffering, &c. the apostle ascribes altogether to charity, which is the very heart and
soul

soul of the new man, and the choicest principle in him.—*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.* 1 Cor. xiii. 4—6.

The daily employ of this new man is hoping and expecting to return to his own native country.—*Grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. v. 21. And in this hope and expectation it exercises much patience and long-suffering till it be obtained; for, *if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.* Rom. viii. 25.

The ears of the new man are very wonderful, and cannot be described. But this is a truth; God speaks many words by the Spirit to the soul, or speaks friendly to the church's heart. Hosea ii. 14. And what the Lord speaks is not only felt, but heard and understood, although no sound reaches the ears of the body. Paul, when caught up into paradise, heard unspeakable words, which it was not possible to utter; and yet he doth not know whether the body was in company or not. 2 Cor. xii. 8.

To infuse and form this new man in the soul is the work of the Holy Spirit, and so is every renewal and every revival of him, from the first formation of him till perfection in endless glory
takes

takes place. *The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.* Psalm cxxxviii. 8.

How sensibly felt are the revivals of this good work under the operations of the Holy Ghost! Sometimes by communicating fresh power, all on a sudden, when every thing seems to be falling to decay, and the poor believer is just ready to cast away all confidence, and in his own mind to fall a victim to sin and Satan, concluding all to be lost for ever; then is the divine power of the Spirit put forth in this new creature.—*That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.* Eph. iii. 16.

Sometimes great communications of light, and fresh discoveries of the love of God in Christ, wonderfully strengthen and inflame the new man.—*But mine horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.* Psalm xii. 10.

At other times the uncommon struggles of hope, attended with vigour, earnestness, diligence, liveliness, activity, and uncommon anxiety, after the glory that is to be revealed, appear in this new man. *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.* Rom. xv. 13. Every day, throughout the believer's whole pilgrimage, does the Holy Spirit revive or renew this new man of

grace in one member or another; as it is written; *For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but, though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* 2 Cor. iv. 15, 16.

That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. John iii. 6. Now it is against the Holy Ghost, in his forming and preserving this new man which is born of the Spirit, that the flesh lusteth.—*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But, if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.* Gal. v. 17, 18. The way that the Spirit leads us is by influencing and putting fresh strength, life, love, and fervour, in the new man. This new man of grace is a mighty worker while the Spirit keeps renewing of him.—*I laboured (says Paul) more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

Sometimes we have noble works ascribed to the different members of the new man. We read of *the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Thess. i. 3. Sometimes faith appears very strong, and performs wonders, especially in times of great need; as we see in David, when he went against the giant of Gath. At other times love labours mightily both to the Lord and to his people: the first may be
seen

seen in Mary at the Lord's feet, and the second in Paul to the Corinthians. At other times the patience of hope is very conspicuous in waiting for that which is hoped for.—*I will wait upon the Lord, that he will hide his face from Jacob, and I will look for him.* Isa. viii. 17.

This new man of grace comes from the fulness of Christ, in whom all fulness dwells, and out of whose fulness we all receive, and grace for grace. And it is the Spirit that works it in us by his wonderful operation, and he supplies this new man daily; hence we read of a *supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*, Phil. i. 19; that is, the Spirit of Christ supplies us with more grace from Christ, the blessed head of influence.

Now (says the apostle) *if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law.* They that are under the law have nothing else but lust and corruption working in them; let them talk of spurious holiness as much as they please. “Law was given (says Milton) to evince man's natural pravity, by stirring up sin against law to fight.” *The motions of sins, which were by the law* [stirred up], *did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.* Rom. vii. 5. So that he who is under the law is destitute of that new man, and of course has nothing but sin in him.

He may at times feel rebukes, checks, and lashes within; which he may, and many do, call the old man of sin: but this is a mistake; it is not an

enemy, but a friend; not the old man of sin, but honest conscience doing his duty, buffering the sinner for his hypocrisy. So, on the other hand, a hypocrite may, at times, find a little calm of peace and tranquillity in his mind, which he may call the new man, and I believe thousands do so: but, as the former is nothing but natural conscience *accusing*, so the latter is nothing but natural conscience *excusing*, according to the light of nature.

For, even under this calm of peace and tranquillity, there is no godly sorrow flowing out to God; no condemning, hating, and abhorring self; nor any real tears of pious grief, mourning over a suffering Saviour; no repentance towards the Lord, nor heartfelt gratitude to him, nor real thanks and praises for his long-suffering, undeserved, and unexpected clemency.

- Such men's peace springs from a cessation of arms with Satan; they have had a few day's respite, in which the devil has not wallowed them in the mire; and, during this interval, they have done something for God, and of course he must be pleased with them. All this takes its spring from self, and centers in self, and there such faith stands; for he has no trust but in his own heart; look to Jesus he cannot, because there is no good thing in him toward the Lord God of Israel: whereas the believer looks to Jesus, depends on his arm, and views his own heart worse than Satan himself—being *deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*. Jer. xvii. 9. The
believer

believer knows, that he can stand no longer than while the Lord upholds him; if he withdraw his supporting hand he is sure to sink, and when sunk he despairs of all help in his own arm, or in his own heart; he knows that nothing can recover him but a propitious look from his dear Lord, or a restoring visit from him, or a fresh discovery by faith of his dying love, attended with the reviving and renewing operations of the Holy Spirit of promise.

The flesh lusteth against the Spirit in behalf of, and to be gratified in, its own delightful fruits; which the apostle mentions: which are, *adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, brawls, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, &c.* Gal. v. 19—21. Some of these are sins which easily beset the child of God; they often intrude themselves into his mind; yea, even when he would do good some of these are present with him: nor is the believer without his slips and falls in one way or other. But still he is not a servant of sin; for they that are the servants of sin are *free from righteousness*. Rom. vi. 20. Such are free to sin, and free from all righteousness; which the believer never is. He is a servant of righteousness, and doth serve both in faith and love. And, though he does not live without sin, being in one sense still in the flesh, yet sin is neither his element nor his service.—*For, though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh*, 2 Cor. x. 3, but war against it. Nor are

the sins of believers called service; for they have no wages for it, neither present pleasure nor endless death, which are all the wages that a servant of sin gets.—He may be brought *into captivity to the law of sin, which is in his members*. Rom. vii. 23. But a captive and a servant in this matter widely differ.

The apostle, having called the whole mass of inbred corruptions the fruits of the flesh and a body of sin, he also assigns different sins as so many different members of this monstrous body, in allusion to the body of a man.—*Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry*. Col. iii. 5.

So, on the other hand, he calls the principle of implanted grace the new man. And, as this new man is formed by the Holy Spirit, and consists of different graces, so the apostle calls these the fruits of the Spirit, in opposition to the other, which he calls the fruits of the flesh.—*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law*. Gal. v. 22, 23. Now all these, strictly speaking, are not graces of the Spirit; but fruits and effects of his operation: for gentleness, long-suffering, and temperance, may be exercised, and often are exercised; by men in a state of nature. Some, who are inured to sufferings, may and do suffer with much patience; others are naturally temperate; and others as gentle, easy, and unmoved, who have no fear of
God

God before their eyes. But those that are the reverse of these are made so by grace. When the wolf is taught to dwell with the lamb, and the lion to lie down with the kid, then these things are attended to, and men exercise themselves in them in the fear of God.

Nor are all the graces or fruits of the Spirit mentioned in that catalogue. Fear, patience, zeal, and hope, are fruits of the Spirit; and so are contrition, godly sorrow, humility, repentance, &c. Now, as the new man is composed of these manifold graces, so the Holy Spirit, by his powerful operations, enlivens, strengthens, and draws forth into exercise, first one and then another, as seemeth good to him. Sometimes he strengthens faith, and fortifies the mind with such might and power, that the excellency and the power appear so conspicuously to be of God, that the man is quite above himself. *But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.* Micah iii. 8.

Again, when we are led to defend any truth that is opposed, and it pleases the Holy Spirit to instruct, settle, and establish the children of God in them, he not only gives you light into the truth, and brings text after text to the mind to support and confirm it, but fires the soul with such zeal, that we are clad with it as with a cloak.—*My zeal hath consumed me; because mine enemies have forgotten thy words. Thy*

word is very pure; therefore thy servant loveth it.
Psalm cxix. 139, 140.

At other times faith shall be influenced with such power and activity, that the soul can tell beforehand something of the success that shall attend the word.—
When, therefore, I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.
Rom. xv. 28, 29.

Sometimes one grace shall appear predominant, and sometimes another; as patience in Job; meekness, as in Moses; godly sorrow, as in Hannah; jealousy for God's honour, as in Elijah; contrition, as in David; and sometimes love, as in Paul—I am not only ready to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. All these move and act as the Holy Spirit operates in them; he enlivens and invigorates them; but, without a divine breeze, there is neither motion nor emission.—*Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*
Song iv. 16.

If my dearly-beloved brother will observe these things, he will perceive much more than I can describe; and he will find the different frames that he is cast into to be wonderfully suited to the work then in hand. To the Thessalonians Paul was a nurse;

to Timothy an affectionate father; to the Corinthians God made him humility and meekness; to the false apostles an invincible champion; to the weak he was a babe in grace; to the Jews straitened as under the law; to the Gentiles as one guided alone by conscience; to the wise and discerning he was the chiefest apostle; and to Alexander and Elymas the forcerer he was a lion.—*I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*
1 Cor. ix. 22.

Well may the apostle say *there are diversities of operations*; for they are diverse and innumerable too; yea, and often various in one day. Life, contrition, and sorrow, for morning prayer; a sweet flow of gratitude soon after for a thank-offering; upon the back of this comes a promise in due season, increasing faith; then a smiling Providence turns up, that makes the bowels yearn; next comes a letter bringing good tidings, and blessing God for the instrument, and for the power of divine grace put forth; this fires the soul with fresh zeal for the work. Then comes a poor soul telling the dreadful tale of the plague of leprosy breaking out in the house; these touch your love and sympathy. Next comes in a word, and opens out a large field of hidden treasures, pearls and jewels for Zion. And, last of all, comes in an arch hypocrite, appearing to be some great one, when he is nothing, with all the art and craft imaginable to impose upon your judgment;

ment; and, at the appearance of him—*What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. But now bring me a minstrel.* 2 Kings iii. 13, 15. Let my dear brother observe these things, and he will have some insight into this blessed promise—*I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* Isaiah xxvii. 3.

The new man is fed by prayer, by reading, by meditation, by hearing the word, and by conversing with the lively friends of the bridegroom. He is very choice in his food. Hence it appears that, under the dry orations which are drawn from the letter, and those confused jumbles upon freewill, enforced by those who have not been emptied of self, but are settled upon their lees, and those violent shouts from the top of the mountain, not of Zion, but of Sinai: none of these entertain the new man; it is not such tidings as these that bring him, nor does the Spirit, who forms him, accompany such. God gives *testimony to the word of his grace.* The new man feeds upon power. You read of strength by the Spirit's might in the inward man; you read of his being renewed day by day, and of his being renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Light, attended with love, feeds him; it revives him, refreshes him, and renews him. He gathers his myrrh with his spice. Myrrh is a bitter potion
to

to the old man, but it never hurts the new one. Spice comes after the myrrh has had the desired effect. But this sweet scent is no more pleasing to the old man than the myrrh; the bitterness of trials mortifies the old man, and so does the sweet odours of humbling grace. He eats his honeycomb with his honey, and drinks his wine with his milk. Song v. 1. The promises, and the sweets that are hid in them; divine love, and the comforts that attend it; are the sweet provisions of the new man. The old man, with all his members, Paul describes; and those very evil things of which he is composed are the things that feed, entertain, and gratify him. When he is fed, then the new man is starved, and leanness enters into the soul. So of the manifold graces infused or wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit is the new man composed, and by those very things of which he is composed is he fed. His divine origin is God, and therefore called the divine nature. His mansion is Christ Jesus, in whom all fulness of grace dwells, and from whose fulness all grace is received. Fresh supplies from the same fulness by the Holy Ghost feed him and keep him alive; and under no other preaching but that of preaching Christ; and it must be Christ revealed and made known in the soul of the preacher. Under such, and under no other, can this new man be fed and nourished; and this many know by sad experience,

ence, who are seeking water and there is none; and their tongues are failing for thirst. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*

And so says your companion in travail,

W. HUNTINGTON.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

*To the Rev. J. JENKINS, at the new Vicarage,
Lewes, Sussex.*

*To my dearly beloved Son, greeting; wishing that grace
and peace may be multiplied to him through our Lord
Jesus Christ.*

I RECEIVED yours, and am thankful for the good tidings. Go on; God shall endow us with a good dowry, by adding to us many more sons; these are a kind of first-fruits of God's creatures, and these fruits shall remain. But I shall proceed with my delightful subject, which is to shew

18. That the Holy Spirit in the gospel must be obeyed; for, according to the obedience of man is the reward to be given, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.—*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them*

them who are of the household of faith. Gal. vi. 7—10. To sow to the Spirit is to obey him and to be led by him. Our Lord calls himself a sower, and the word of life which he sowed he calls seed; and in sowing the good seed of the word he was obedient to him that appointed him.—*My Father gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak, and I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* John xii. 49, 50. Now there is a twofold sowing to the Spirit: internal and external. Internal when we observe his operations, and are obedient to his motions and dictates; for instance, when he applies the word with power, and reproves us with the word, convincing us of our sins by it; then to speak evil of the preacher by whom the Spirit speaks, to rail against him and the truth, is hating the light, and rebelling against it and against our own convictions of the truth of it; and this rebellion is against the Holy Ghost himself. It is said of Israel, in the wilderness, that *they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit; so that he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.* Isaiah lxiii. 10. Moses and Aaron were God's mouth to the people; the Holy Spirit spake in them to the children of Israel: but *they envied Moses in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.* Psalm cvi. 16. And by their rebelling against these men they rebelled against the Holy Spirit which influenced them and spoke by them.—*They angered him also at the waters of*

of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes : Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips. Psalm cvi. 32, 33. Sinners, re-proved and convinced by the Holy Spirit, should not only come to the light and be diligent in their attendance on the word ; but God calls for confessions to be made to him, and for submission to his will ; which is called humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time. There is such a thing as accepting the punishment of our iniquity, choosing the chastenings of God before our own will and our own way ; saying, as others have done, *Search me and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* And again, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me ; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.* Coming to the light that our deeds may be made manifest ; exposing our conscience to the force and power of his word, however sharp and piercing ; confessing all our crimes, which the light of the word discovers and reproves us for ; is accepting our punishment, and preferring the chastisements of God before carnal ease and the pleasures of sin, and is yielding obedience to the Holy Spirit ; and it shews that the heart is made honest.

2. The Spirit is a spirit of supplication. He sets the elect of God to crying day and night, until
God

God avenge them of their adversaries. *Call upon me in the time of trouble* (says God); *I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* And again, *I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried; they shall call upon my name, and I will bear them; and I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.* This should be carefully and diligently attended to when the Holy Spirit is illuminating, quickening, reproofing, and convincing the sinner; and if it is neglected the Spirit resents it, and makes conscience accuse the sinner for this his neglect, and he is often covered with shame and confusion of face when he goes to the throne of grace again. Nor is it seldom that some disaster or other befalls the sensible sinner, under this sin of omission, when prayer has been neglected; and oftentimes the sinner is informed of this when he comes to examine himself. Prayer, in the times of the gospel, was typified by the offering of incense under the law, which was perpetual morning and evening; and prayer goes by the same name under the gospel.—*For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.* Mal. i. 11.

Moreover, God requires of us thank-offerings for favours received.—*I will make her wilderness like*

like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. The souls of God's saints are often filled with joy and gladness, that thanksgiving and the voice of melody may redound to the glory of God, by humble acknowledgments of his mercies, and by singing his praises.

Furthermore, we should celebrate those perfections of God which shine so bright in his appointment of Christ Jesus to be the Saviour of mankind; which is done by speaking good, or by making honourable mention, of his holy name; and by proclaiming the glorious perfections of his nature, making them famous and illustrious among mankind; praising and commending the holy properties of his nature; and enumerating and extolling them, by speaking of his manifold and wonderful works, and of the innumerable mercies and blessings of his providence and grace towards us in Christ Jesus. The scriptures abound with such ascriptions, acclamations, and celebrations, in the saints' holy triumphs. David is famous for this; there is scarce a revealed attribute of God but he makes honourable mention of.

As holiness.—*God hath sworn by his holiness, I will rejoice.*

Power.—*Sing unto the Lord a new song, for his own right hand and stretched-out arm hath gotten himself the victory.*

His might and reign, his glory and majesty.—*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness*

greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Psalm cxlv. 3—7, 10—12.

Almost every perfection of the Divine Being is brought forth in the holy triumphs of the royal psalmist, justice and judgment not excepted.—*Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face.* Of loving-kindness David sings; of faithfulness and truth; of goodness, pity, and compassion; and of mercy, and the eternal duration of it, throughout a whole psalm.

Different frames and different dispensations call for different offerings and exercises. *Is any afflicted? let him pray.* Times of trouble and times of affliction in the furnace are seasons for extraordinary prayers; the common morning and evening sacrifices are not sufficient at such times; we must give ourselves unto prayer; give up ourselves wholly unto it, and attend to this very thing. Nor will the old common way, no, nor even the usual mode
of

of expressions, do. Fiery trials call for fresh power, and even for agonizing energy; new words, new arguments, and unusual pleas and entreaties must be made use of; our arguments and pathetic pleadings must tally with our dreadful sensations. Souls that meditate terror must fetch their words from their feelings, or else the words of their mouth will run counter to the meditations of their heart. We must use all the skill and oratory of distress, grief, and sorrow, and all the eloquence of misery. *I cried to thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth? Psalm xxx. 8, 9. Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Psalm lxxvii. 7—9. For the grave cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth, Isa. xxxviii, 18.*

As times of affliction are praying times, or times to give ourselves unto prayer; so times of prosperity are times for praise, for thanksgiving, and for singing with grace in our hearts, making melody to the Lord. If we would sow to the Spirit we must observe these things; and likewise shun all damnable heresies, which have the least tendency to depreciate the Son of God, or to eclipse his glory, or lessen him in our esteem or affections. The Holy Spirit is

both the testifier and the glorifier of Christ, and he will never countenance any low, mean, unworthy, or unbecoming conceptions of him. I am not speaking of the evil suggestions or fiery darts of Satan, which we cannot help, and which are Satan's sins and not ours; but of those damnable principles and sentiments which some men hold, and which divest the Saviour of all the glory and majesty of deity, and debase him to the level of a mere creature, which is what God the Holy Ghost will ever resist and resent.

Sowing to the Spirit internally, is to walk as the Spirit leads us; he is to guide us into all truth, and not to speak of himself. This chiefly respects our principles, the object of our faith and worship, and the true and spiritual worship and adoration which God requires of us; the whole of which is included in what the scripture calls *the way of holiness*, Isaiah xxxv. 8; which is following the Lord *in the regeneration*. Matt. xix. 28. In which following all things become new; not only a new birth, but we are brought into the bond of a new covenant, are made to serve in the newness of spirit, with new views and new principles, and to walk in a new and living way.

The Spirit leads us to *walk with God in peace and equity*. These two, peace and equity, always go together. When the believer keeps a conscience void of offence he delights himself in the abundance of peace; he makes straight paths for his feet, and he
finds

finds his ways to be pleasantness and his paths peace. But, if he make a crooked path, (and all the ways of sin are crooked, because they are counter to the will and word of God), he that goes therein shall not know peace. But

2. There is a sowing to the Spirit externally. And the apostle's explanation of this sowing to the Spirit is given by himself.—*Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.* And then tells us what he means by well-doing.—*As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.* Gal. vi. 9, 10. To do good to them that are not as yet in the faith, is to labour to recommend Christ and his gospel to them by a becoming life and conversation, to drop a word of reproof or instruction to them when opportunity offers, or to use our endeavours to bring them under the word.—*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* Rev. xxii. 17. After our Lord had called two or three of his first followers, he made use of these to bring others. Andrew, hearing and seeing John point to Christ, followed him; he then finds his brother Peter, and brings him to Jesus; the next day Jesus found Philip; and then Philip finds Nathanael and brings him: and, blessed be God, this work is going on still.

Moreover, by doing good unto all men the apostle means liberality. Poor people have more exalted notions of alms-deeds than they have of any other good-work whatsoever. You may talk to them about faith, and about love to the brotherhood, and the patience of hope, and of suffering afflictions, of bearing the cross, and of self-denial; but these are all out of their sight and out of their reach; but circumspection in life and a liberal heart are obvious to all, and stop the mouths of all, unless it be the devil himself. And in this the child of God has a double advantage. The world loves its own; sinners love sinners, and will give and lend to sinners; but sinners cannot love saints as saints, and because they belong to Christ; nor can they relieve them, or be charitable to them, because of God's love to them in Christ Jesus. *When saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?* The answer is, *Inasmuch as ye did it not to these my brethren, ye did it not to me.* Not one of all these ever relieved a child of God as such; whereas there are thousands of sinners, persecutors, and even enemies both to God and to his church, who do partake largely of the liberality of the people of God; and this is acceptable to God, as may be seen in the prayers and alms of Cornelius the centurion, Acts x; and in the nobleness of mind which Abraham shewed to the king of Sodom. By these means some are drawn or won to hear the word of God, and that
to

to profit. The mouths of others are stopped, while the believer makes it manifest that the kingdom (of which he is a subject) is not of this world. And in all these things God is glorified; and the children of God are a sweet savour unto him, both in them that perish and in them that are saved.—*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* Matt. v. 16.

But the apostle adds, *Especially to the household of faith.* The ties of nature give us a feeling for those who are in the flesh, and fill us with wonder at discriminating grace, when the bond of all perfectness binds us more strongly to the excellent of the earth; for we can only pity the other, but we can delight ourselves in these. To the household of faith, if we sow sparingly we shall reap sparingly, and if we sow bountifully we shall reap bountifully. To receive a prophet in the name of a prophet, has the promise of a prophet's reward. To receive a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, has the promise of a righteous man's reward. And he that receives one of the little ones that belong to Christ, shall in nowise lose his reward. A morsel of bread, or a cup of cold water only, given to any in the name of a disciple, shall most surely be rewarded at the resurrection of the just; for *he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* We must sow prayers in their behalf; we may sow the seeds of instruction in their ears, bread and water to their bellies,

bellies, apparel to their backs, and relief in their necessities; and reap fourfold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. To all this the word of God directs, and to all this the Holy Spirit leads—*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.* Eph. v. 9.

Once more, my dear son. The best of men have no more than their own appointed time on the earth; the strength, the natural and spiritual abilities, the grace, and such worldly substance as it pleases God to give them. Now, as all these come of God through Christ, so from all these things Christ expects some returns; for, when he comes, it will be to know what every one has gained by trading. Some redeem the time while the days are evil. Paul was willing to spend and be spent for the church; he spent his property and his strength in the service of Christ; with the grace that he had received by the Spirit he seasoned many; and by his natural and spiritual abilities he became all things to all men; he instructed many, he silenced many gain-sayers, and left a glorious testimony behind of his fruitfulness in the church, of the goodness of God to him, of the blessedness of his state, and of his glorious and triumphant end: and in all these things he sowed to the Spirit; and they that do so *shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* And this reaping respects this present life as well as the future. God's blessing upon mount Zion is life for evermore. And it has pleased God to put the blessing of life
into

into every spiritual thing that the believer deals in. Upon his believing he passes from death to life; his repentance is unto life; the promises he obtains are the words of life; his justification is unto life; God circumcises his heart to love God that he may live; his hope is a lively hope; and the very way in which he walks is the new and living way. In short, the love and eternal purpose of God, the voice of the Son, and the operations of the Spirit, are all life to the believer; and the more we sow the more we reap; the more we love God and the brethren, the more lively we are; the stronger our faith and the firmer our hope are, the more abundant is our life. In all these things lie our sowing and reaping. And let us, my dear brother, be constant, unmoveable, and always abounding in this work of the Lord, knowing that our labour is not, shall not, be in vain in the Lord. To get weary and to faint in well-doing, is sad work. *Look to yourselves (says John) that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.* 2 John 8.

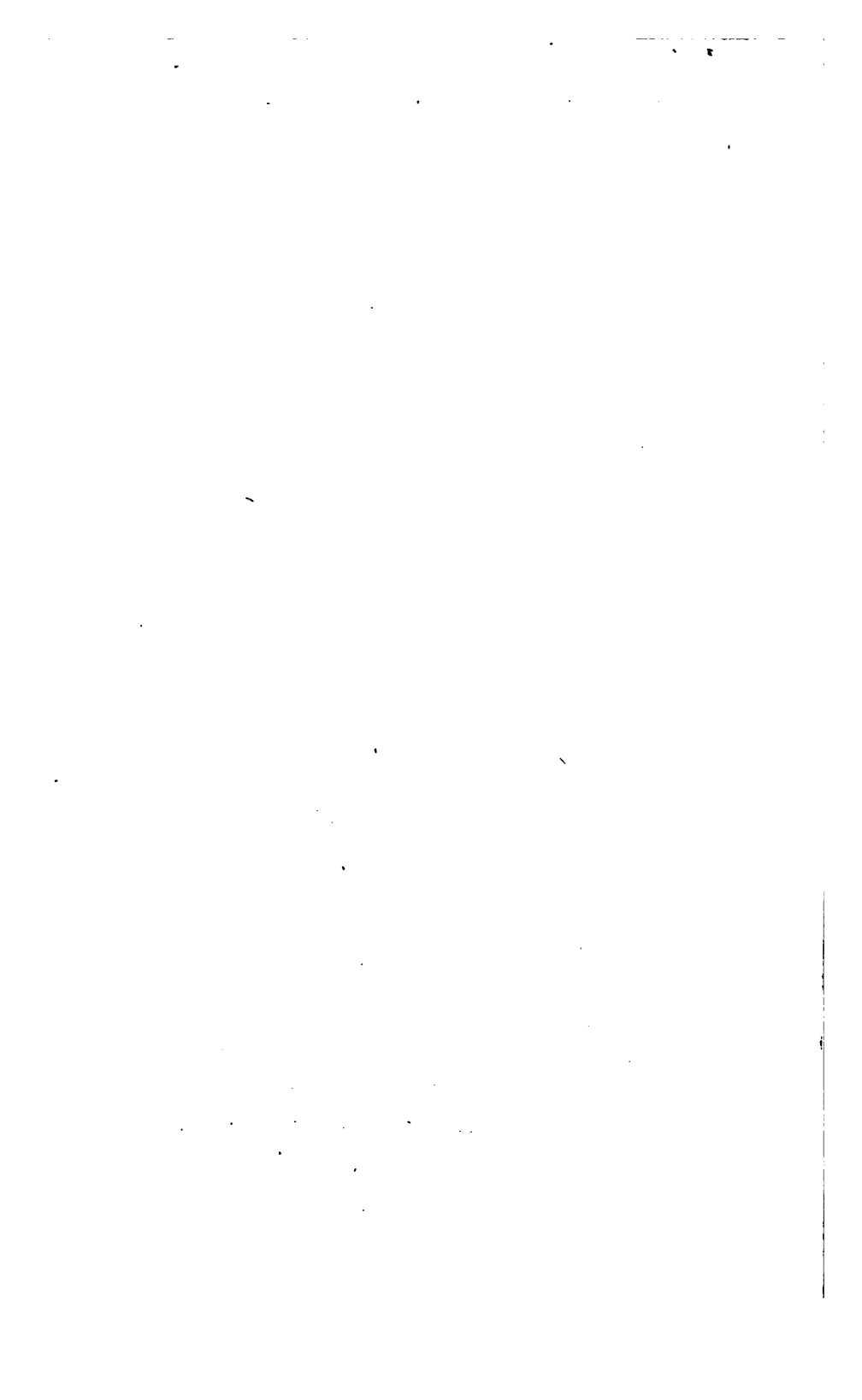
And now, my beloved son, seeing we are not ignorant of Satan's devices, and knowing his desperate and inveterate enmity both to Christ and his church, suffer him not to baffle and confuse thee, by setting up any imaginary resemblances of the divine persons in your mind when you are approaching to God, infinity and immensity cannot be circumscribed! God filleth all space. Nor suffer the devil to confound thee, by suggesting that you will displease the
one

one by addressing the other. Whatsoever is truly and properly God is the object of divine worship. And that Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the Holy Ghost the Spirit of God, are truly, really, and properly God, is as clearly revealed in the scriptures as that the Father is so. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our heavenly Father, and the communion of the Spirit of all grace, be with thee, and with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, both now and for evermore; is the prayer of,* dear son,

Yours in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON, S.S.

THE END.





The time of the singing of birds is come. Cant. ii. 12.
The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons
and the owls. Isaiah. xliii. 20.

A
CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

NOCTUA AURITA,

OF THE DESERT,

AND

PHILOMELA,

OF THE KING'S DALE.

PUBLISHED BY

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD-STREET,
AND AT MONKWELL-STREET MEETING.

The time of the singing of birds is come.—CANT. ii. 12.

The beasts of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls.—ISA. iv. 30.

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1799.



P R E F A C E.

BELOVED FRIEND,

HAVING seen and read most, if not all, the letters which have passed between you and my dear sister, it is my opinion that they would be of great use to many if they were made public. When I consider and reflect upon the light, support, and help, which I received when in my trouble from many of the Epistles of Faith, as well as from your other writings; and the many accounts I have since had of the usefulness of the Living Testimonies to many souls that were in distress, darkness, and bondage; it is my request, should it meet with your approbation, that you would publish them. I am fully persuaded that the matter they contain leads to the true and living way. The bulk of professors, in our day, as far as I am able
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PREFACE.

to judge, are entire strangers to the path of regeneration. There are but a few who walk in the narrow path of life, and who experience the love of God therein; and fewer still who can cast up this way before others, and whose ministry is that of the Spirit, and not of the letter. And, as I believe there are some, in many dark corners of the country, ready to perish for lack of knowledge, who are seeking the truth, but, for want of some one to guide them, they are kept in ignorance of it, who knows but that Providence may send these letters (as I am certain, from my own knowledge, he has many of your other writings) into their hands; which, under God, may give them light on their state. I think there are in these letters some things new and singular. I feel a desire to see them in print. I have been acquainted with my friend now for some years. When I first knew her she stood very high in her confidence, such as it was; but, when the Almighty wounded me, and made me speak out of the abundance of my own heart, her confidence was soon sapped; and I believe she found her confidence had ever been in her own tabernacle; and, when it was rooted up, the king of terrors laid

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laid hold of her, as he will one day of many who, like her, think themselves now very secure and strong. But the first-born of death will soon devour that sort of strength; and hunger-bitten they are already. I have been an eye-witness of her distress under the spirit of bondage, in which she continued two or three years; and likewise, as you well know, of her happy enlargement, which she enjoyed for a long time. And I have narrowly watched her descent from the mount of transfiguration. She has been now for some time in the furnace; and I believe in my heart she will endure the fire, and come forth as gold. At present she walks very steady, humble, meek, and lowly, and appears to quit herself like one that seeth him who is invisible. She is the first fruit of Achaia unto the Lord; at least she was the first that publicly returned to give glory to God; and she was a stranger; and cleansed she is I verily believe. And, as there are many professors now standing where she once stood, and others in darkness and distress through legal bondage, I am in hopes that making the letters public will be a means to awaken some of the former, and encourage the latter. That they may be a caution to some,

strength

PREFACE.

strength and encouragement to others, stir up jealousy in many, and be blessed to comfort the weak and infant race, is, in this request, the view, and, when published, will be the earnest wish and prayer of

Your truly sincere lover and friend,

VESPERTILIO TUMULIS.

PRELIMINARY

PRELIMINARY EPISTLES.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

BELOVED OF GOD,

MAY I not say, O Hail! highly favoured, blessed art thou among women, when he that is mighty hath done so great things for thee, in remembrance of his mercy, as he promised to our forefathers in the faith, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever?"

It is jubilee with thee; the days of the Son of man are come, days of good things. And would it not be commendable in thee to act the part of the poor lepers in the siege of Samaria; that is, to inform the King's household of it? Dost thou well to feast at the banquet thyself, and to go and hide all the rest? If the Lord forms a person for himself, it is that he may shew forth his praise.

The poor woman with her issue obtained virtue from the Covenant Head privately, and was going to withdraw, in hope of escaping the cen-

sure and displeasure of the Jews. With the heart she believed unto righteousness. Thus God prepared her heart; but with the mouth we must make confession unto salvation. This was left undone till God created the fruit of her lips, and then she was called forth to make confession of her faith. By these means the word sounds out, which raises curiosity in some, desires in others, it encourages many, and provokes not a few to jealousy and emulation.

We must render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and unto God the things which are God's. To smuggle foreign goods robs the prince of his revenue; and to hide the heavenly flame under a bushel robs God of his praise. "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." The nine were self-seekers, moved to pray for a temporal cure only; self-interest drove them to it, and base ingratitude kept them from acknowledging the cure; and, by this art of smuggling the benefit, they escaped the reproach of Christ, which Moses so highly esteemed, and did not lose their reputation among the scribes and pharisees. But, alas! these could have no faith; for "how can you believe (saith the Saviour) who receive honour one of another, and not the honour that cometh from God only?" We are to weep with them that weep, and re-
joice

joyce with them that rejoyce. I was in company
 with his excellency the Welsh ambaffador at your
 groaning, when your bearing pains and birth
 throes were upon you ; and we both took a part
 of your burden ; and I am informed that you felt
 the fpirit of heavinefs get lighter upon you from
 that hour. But where is my part of the caudle ?
 I travailed in birth again and again till Chrift was
 formed in thee. And now this work is done ;
 but what account have I had of it ? and, there-
 fore, how can I rejoyce ? Ephraim is comforted ;
 but there is a promife of comfort to his mourners.
 And again : “ Yet, behold, therein fhall be left a
 remnant that fhall be brought forth, both fons
 and daughters : behold, they fhall come forth unto
 you, and ye fhall fee their ways and their doings,
 and ye fhall be comforted concerning the evil that
 I have brought upon Jerufalem ; and they fhall
 comfort you when ye fee their ways and their do-
 ings.” Ezek. xiv. 22. Where is my fhare of this
 promife ? This part of the price is withheld.

The comforts of hope, the testimony of a good
 confcience, and the pleafing accounts of God’s
 giving testimony to the word of his grace, is the
 promifed reward of the labourers in the Lord’s
 vineyard, and is no fmall part of the penny a day.
 If I might intrude upon a little of thy time, I
 fhould be glad of fome fhort account of thy cala-
 mity when we fell into company at the G—— ;
 and how thou cameft into that deplorable ftate.

No small portion of furnace-work has fallen to my share. And, when I saw the anguish of thy soul, I never found myself more sensibly touched with the grief of any person: nor did I ever feel a fuller persuasion in my mind of any person's deliverance, nor more freedom and confidence to predict it, and in the strongest terms; and I plainly saw (at your departure) that neither Satan, infidelity, no, nor your carnal reason, could stand before it; so mightily grows the word of the Lord and prevails. I must confess that, when I heard of thy happy delivery under the ministry of my dearly beloved and most faithful brother in the Lord, I stood astonished at the goodness of God, and at the concurring providences which went before on thy behalf. One friend in our company could not settle his business to return to London with me till Saturday morning. Saturday is a day that I am never from my study, if I can possibly help it. One or two in company pressed me not a little to stay; and those at G—— most kindly invited me to come and visit them, where it pleased God that we were to meet with you, whom I never saw before to my knowledge. And surely God set before us an open door. Our mouths were wonderfully opened to you; and I think your heart was, in some measure, opened to us. And this greatly convinced me that my stay was of God; nor could conscience contradict it; nor was my cuse empty on the Lord's day following

following on account of it. The favour that I have to crave is, how the troubles came upon thee, and how long thou wast left to occupy business in those deep waters; and whether thou wast in a profession previous to those trials or not. Now, as I am engaged in the work of the Lord, and desirous of knowing the wonders that God does in the land, that I may bless him with thee, I hope thou wilt not take this liberty amiss, seeing thou art no more a stranger nor a foreigner, but a fellow-citizen of the saints, and of the household of God; and that thou mayest long enjoy the pleasures, privileges, and immunities, of that city, is the earnest prayer of,

Dear sister,

Thine affectionate brother in Christ Jesus,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE attempted, as the Lord has enabled me, to comply with your request, in giving you some particulars respecting the good work the Lord has been pleased to work in my soul under the ministry of his Majesty's herald now with us. I think it is more than three years ago that I first heard him preach a sermon from these words: " Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." He gave such a description of the way that most professors entered into the fold, as quite astonished me. I could hardly credit it; but was not then left to contradict it; but I believed it could not touch me. I thought it did me some good, as it led my heart out in gratitude to God that he had not left me to make such an entrance, for I was just in the state of the Laodicean church, thought myself rich and increased with goods, and to have need of nothing; but knew not that I was poor and wretched, miserable, blind, and naked. Had he asked me, at that time, of my experience, I should have told

him that I had been on the mount of transfiguration with Peter, and in the third heaven with Paul.

I heard him for some time occasionally on sabbath-day evenings. But he asserted such strange things respecting the first work of the Spirit's operation on a sinner's heart, when he came to convince him of sin, as was point blank against my experience; therefore I thought I was a witness against him that he was wrong. His once asserting, that when the Spirit came to convict a sinner, and to convince him of unbelief, that such a soul could apply none of the promises of the gospel, this quite enraged me, and I declared I would never hear him preach another sermon. I therefore left his ministry for, I believe, two or three months; during which time I found a great deal of enmity work against him, and his ministry too. However, conscience was not altogether silent at this time; and I should at times have such thoughts as these, viz. Where does all this enmity spring from? It cannot be a fruit of the Spirit of God. However, these words of Paul used to set matters right at times: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." That I had the faith which is of the operation of God's Spirit, I believed no one that knew me doubted; but feeling this enmity rise high at times made me a little uneasy, and I thought I would hear him again,

again, as he might be got more moderate. I had heard him but a few times before the Lord was pleased to strip me of all my supposed excellency. How true is that saying of the Psalmist, " When thou with thy rebukes correctest man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume like the moth." And so I found it. And I soon found the faith that I had so much boasted of to be nothing but bold presumption. God sent the killing commandment home to my conscience, which stirred up all the nest of uncleanness that lay hid in my heart before, and I could only view an angry God in a fiery law ; and a dreadful sight it was to me ; it made me, like Moses, to fear and quake. Here was no access to God. The flaming sword seemed to turn every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Instead of faith, hope, joy, and peace, I felt my carnal mind was nothing but enmity against God. My heart was as hard as an adamant ; my will was pregnant with nothing but stubbornness, perverseness, and rebellion ; and, as to my affections, I knew not where they were ; but I knew they were not fixed on God, where they ought to be. Pray I could not. I had no faith ; and God's word declares that whatever is not of faith is sin ; and that the prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. This made me almost distracted. Every sermon I heard from him cut and condemned me ; and the more it did so, the more I was rivetted both to him and his preaching.

preaching. I longed for the return of the sabbath, that I might be tried and searched. I was now determined to leave the place I was joined to as a member, and attend his ministry on sabbath mornings, as what I heard at the old place my soul could not endure; it was like singing songs to a heavy heart. How my soul loathed that daubing with untempered mortar! that peace which was spoken to my soul when God had spoken no peace! Blessed, for ever blessed be the Lord, who has delivered me from that empty profession, from that snare of the fowler. It was indeed sovereign mercy that delivered me from falling into that ditch, where the blind are leading the blind; and I was as blind as any one that is left behind, and perhaps far more presumptuous. Pardon this digression, dear sir, for Christ's love had just touched the handle of the lock, which made me thus wander. But to return. I went on so, I think, about a year, groaning under this heavy burden. I could not unbosom myself fully to any one. I sometimes accidentally fell into the herald's company at the G — ; and, as I wished much to have some conversation with him, I pressed him to favour me with a visit; and he said he would, which raised my expectation of having an opportunity to open my mind to him. But I believe it was a year after his first invitation before he came, which I assure you tried me not a little. The first time he called I could not persuade him to get off his

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horse.

horse. This distressed me much, and I concluded that no one cared for my soul, and so gave up all thoughts of ever having an opportunity of speaking to him, unless I went to him on purpose; and that I feared would be deemed too great a freedom; and, besides, I was afraid that I should not be able to make him to understand me, nor be able to point my case out so bad as it really was; and, should that be the case, I should be deprived of receiving a faithful sentence from his mouth. I believe he read my condemnation in my face, which used to make me tremble from head to foot. When I saw him come down from the pulpit stairs I thought he looked at me as if he wished I would never enter the chapel more. I think it was about a month after this, one sabbath morning, he had been cutting and condemning me till I thought I was almost in the bottomless pit. I could no longer refrain, and therefore went to him into the vestry. He received me kindly, and gave me liberty to tell him all I wished; and, to my great surprise, he told me he really believed the Lord had begun a work on my soul, and that the Spirit of God was leading me to a fight and sense of my state by nature, and giving me to see that without Christ I could do nothing. What I felt at hearing this I cannot express; it was like life from the dead. I did not lose my burden, but I felt a gleam of hope from this consideration, that, if it was the Lord's work, I was not beyond the reach

reach of mercy. I could, from this time, tell him my whole heart and soul without any reserve; and he was the only person to whom I could. And many words has he spoken to me in private which have helped me with a little help when I have thought I was near upon the borders of despair. He once preached from these words in Malachi: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall surely come, saith the Lord of Hosts." Under this sermon I seemed to have a glimpse of the person of Christ. I could not tell what it was then. I think it had some effect in attracting my affections, for I lost my burden for several days; and, though it was not attended with any appropriating faith, yet it produced a joy in my soul which I had not felt before. I nursed this frame till I lost it, and my burden returned heavier than ever. Yet I cannot help thinking but that was the season that Christ knit my affections to himself; and it was the only season of real joy that I ever experienced till the Lord was pleased to break my fetters. As I before observed, my burden got heavier; and I found worldly cares got such hold of my mind that I was bowed down under them. My memory could retain nothing but what was against me. If I attempted to read but a chapter in the Bible, my thoughts were like
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the fool's eyes, wandering to the ends of the earth. If I attended the word preached, it was the same. And, though I was taught, by bitter experience, something of the importance of the truths I heard, yet, if I attempted to pray, though I knew I must perish everlastingly if the Lord did not give me the things I felt my need of, yet here worldly cares would so crowd into my mind that I have forgot what I came to God for. This I thought was a black mark indeed; this made my burden intolerable. His ministry still cut me off in the matter of faith. He would describe all I felt; and sometimes, under the word, I would have a little gleam of light to see something of the Spirit's work, which would give me a little hope that I was in the footsteps of the flock. But he was sure not to leave the pulpit till he had positively asserted that in such a soul, under those feelings, there was faith; which was like striking me dead; for I was well convinced I was quite destitute of that precious grace; and these two passages of scripture were, to me, quite a confirmation of it. The first is the words of Christ himself, when he says to his disciples, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and it should be done." The mountain I conceived to be unbelief. The Saviour says the mustard seed is the least of all seeds; and I drew this inference from it—that, if I had the least degree of faith

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in my heart, I should not be held so fast under its power. The other passage is, what John says in one of his epistles : " This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." But, with respect to my knowing any thing of this victory, my conscience bore witness that worldly cares so captivated my thoughts, that I could not keep them where I wished them to be for one minute. What it was which kept me from black despair I know not. All the hope I had was this : when I had a gleam of light to see that the path I was in had been trodden by many who had received pardon and peace in times past, then I thought perhaps God might save me. But then I knew not but that this hope might be cut off ; and, should this take place, I must be lost for ever. And I lived in daily expectation that this would be the case. At times I should find my burden get lighter ; at least, I should feel myself more insensible of it. Then I thought I was in a worse situation than before ; and I fought for it as if it had been my chiefest treasure ; though I knew, when I had it, it almost made me distracted. I laboured long under a sharp temptation, and was saying, like one of old, " I choose strangling rather than life." Any instrument of death I could not bear in my sight ; and was afraid I should be left to be my own executioner. The Lord still held me up to the light, and to a sight of his justice and sovereignty ; and I saw clearly that he would be
just

just if he condemned me, and would be glorified in doing it, for I had procured it all to myself; and that my mouth would be for ever stopped, for I was under a threefold condemnation—condemned by the law, condemned by the gospel, and by my own conscience. But here I felt it cut closest; the thoughts of being condemned by the gospel, which is in itself good news and glad tidings, and in which is revealed a Saviour, who I saw was every way sufficient and able to save me. But it all rested on the act of his sovereign will; and whether that act would be put forth in mercy or in justice, I knew not. Here all legal hopes are cut; no bottom in this dungeon, And this was the place where sovereign mercy took me up. About this time God, in his kind providence, sent you down to the King's dale. You were, by appointment, to spend a day at the G——, and I was invited to meet you there. My case, at that time, seemed to be desperate. I had been for some time in great fear of losing my rationality, and was sure it must take place, if God did not appear for me; and then I thought I should be left to curse and blaspheme all that was good. This cut me to the quick. I was truly miserable, and thought myself not fit for the society of any that feared the Lord. I thought, if they did but know my heart, they would spurn me, and especially such an old servant of the Lord as I conceived you to be; for which reason I had a deal of pro and con in my mind

mind that morning whether to go or not. I wanted to hear your conversation, and others whom I knew were to be there; and glad should I be could I have been shut in a closet for that purpose. However, I at last concluded to go, but with this resolution, that I would by no means whatever open my mouth. You were almost a stranger to me, I having never been in your company but once before, nor ever had any conversation with you. When I came I found you there, with several others, at dinner, and I was placed next to you. Even this circumstance made my heart ready to burst within me. O, thought I, did you but know what a wretch I am, you would not endure me so near you! I did try to hide my face with my bonnet as much as I could. But you had not sat many minutes at dinner before you related a circumstance of a woman who was brought under convictions by your ministry, and who at last was quite deprived of her rationality, and was put into a mad-house; and her husband said to you, "You always said it was the work of God on her soul; but what can you say now?" You said to him in answer, "And so I do now; and I believe, in God's time, she will be brought to her right mind." This account was, indeed, like fewel to that fiery temptation I was then under; and no sooner was the word out of your mouth, than my sensations were such as I cannot describe. I thought I even seemed as if I felt my senses going

from me. At this time, if I had had all the world given me, I could not have helped bursting into tears; they came indeed from the abundant grief of my heart. You observed me, and turned to me very quick, and said to me, "What do you weep for? Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." I answered, "If you knew my state; and what a wretch I am, you would not say so to me." You turned to me again, and said, "What do you cry for?" I made no answer, being determined, if possible, to keep my resolution. You repeated it several times, but could draw no more from me, till his Majesty's herald, who was present, said, "Sir, let her alone; perhaps she will tell you what the matter is by and by." You then left off noticing me, and related a circumstance of a young woman who for some time had attended your ministry, and who was brought into great distress of soul; one who, I found, frequently visited you; and that she came to you one day, and said, "I am come to visit you for the last time, as it is of no use; all is over with me; there is no hope for me, I am certainly lost; I have neither strength nor power left, and sink I must." You said to her, "Well, girl; I see now your strength is gone, and you are brought to the place of promised deliverance; the work of stripping is done, there is nothing left; and I shall soon see you again with a new song in your mouth." These are the words, as near as they are brought to my recollection

recollection at this time. She went from you, and I think, if I am not mistaken, it was but a few days after, as she was attending your ministry, that the Lord appeared for her, burst her bonds, and delivered her soul; and the next time you saw her she told you a better tale, as you had predicted. This account took off the edge of those feelings which were communicated by the other relation, as I thought I saw a near resemblance between her condition and mine. When you had related this, you turned to me again, and asked me the same question as before, to tell you what was the matter with me. I did then open my mouth, and told you it was on account of the hardness and rebellion I felt in my heart. You then ordered a glass of beer, and one for me, and said, "Come, you and I will drink together." You asked me what I would drink to you. I answered, "I can drink my kind love to you." You said, "Can you, from your heart?" I said, "Yes." You said, "What can you love me for? It must be for something of God which you find in me; for no soul can love me for God's sake, unless they are loved of God; for we are to be hated of all men for his name's sake." And you added, "As sure as the Lord liveth, so sure shall you and I sit down together in the kingdom of heaven." That you should speak in such positive language to me, was very strange; neither could I credit you then. You then entered into conversation with me, and told

me all my feelings, as if you had been privy to all that had passed in my heart for three years back ; and even some particular things which I had been exercised with but a few days before, which I knew none could know but God and myself ; and which I had not mentioned even to the King's herald ; therefore I knew you could have no information of them from him. You came to me that day, as Christ came to the woman of Samaria, and told me all things that ever I did. And sent of God you was, I am well persuaded, by the blessed effects that followed. You had your commission from God to " strengthen the weak hands, and to confirm the feeble knees ;" for my soul was refreshed ; and I received a confidence at that time that God would appear for me ; nor did I ever sink so low afterwards ; and it was about a month after this that God was pleased to appear and deliver my soul. You said unto me, " You shall not die in the pit, for in the pit I know you are." I shall never forget this interview, nor the effects of it, as long as I have an existence.

When the Lord saw that my strength was gone, and that there was none shut up or left, then he graciously appeared for me, and made the ministry of his excellency, by which I was alarmed and pulled down, the means of bringing me forth into the light and liberty of the children of God. The sermon was preached from these words : " Thou hast chastened me sore, but thou hast not given
me

me over unto death." The Lord wrought faith in my heart, by that discourse, to believe in the dear Redcemer; and faith brought such joy into my soul as a stranger intermeddleth not with. I could now say, with David, that God had turned my mourning into dancing, and had taken off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. And I really think, when I get to glory, that I shall sing the loudest of redeeming love and sovereign grace of any there. I must adopt, as my own, the language of Mr. Hart,

" That sinners, black as hell, by Christ
Are sav'd, I know full well;
For I his mercy have not mis'd,
And I'm as black as hell."

I have sent you more than I intended when I sat down to write. But I believe every fact was brought to my mind by that blessed Spirit under whose operations they were wrought in my soul. Therefore I did not think that I should do right if I suppressed any part. I hope the homely dress in which it appears will not obscure it, so as to make it unintelligible. I believe you will find it out, as you have travelled the same path before I was brought into it. I present it to you with this request, that I may have an interest in your prayers, that the Lord would perfect that which is still lacking in my faith, and continue to work in me to will and to do of his own good pleasure; that I

may be helped to deny self, and to take up the cross daily. And may the Lord long spare you to be useful in his vineyard, that you may daily see the fruit of your labours in espousing souls to Christ, which shall appear the crown of your joy and rejoicing in the great day, when you shall say, "Here am I and the children which thou hast given me." This is the humble and earnest prayer of

The King's Dale:

PHILOMELA.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

As I have heard that thou wast long in a profession before it pleased God, by the mouth of his herald, to pull thee down and renew thee, I should like (if it be not too great a favour) to know how that first work began. I know that God's work is perfect, and that nothing can be added to it, or taken from it; and that God doth it that men may fear before him. But sometimes the work hath small beginnings, and goes on almost imperceptibly, the impressions not being deep,

deep, as in Job and Hezekiah, who, after a long profession, were led into awful discoveries of their own depravity, and who afterwards were favoured with more conspicuous deliverances, and with brighter views of God's great salvation, and of their interest in it. I should like to know whether you had any sight or sense of the plague of your own heart, the natural hardness and impenitency of it, the infidelity, the rebellion, and carnal enmity of it; and if you were exercised with legal bondage, the wrath of God, and the terrors of a broken law; the fear of death, and the torments which attend it; all of which the saints in the Bible complain much about. And, indeed, how can those be made free who are insensible of their bonds, or those need the physician who are not sick? or those be reconciled who never felt their enmity? or those receive the love of God who have neither fear nor torment to cast out? No small number who stand high in their profession are ignorant of all these things; and sure I am that the office and appointment of Christ doth not reach them, for he was not sent to feed the full, to heal the whole, to support the strong, nor to call the righteous. He was sent to bind up the broken-hearted, to open the prison to those that were bound, &c. They tell us that they were drawn by love; but all that God loves he rebukes and chastens, and scourges every son whom he receiveth; and declares that those who

have no chastisement are bastards, and not sons.
A reply to this will greatly oblige,

Dear sister,

Your willing servant in Christ,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

DEARLY BELOVED FRIEND AND BROTHER
IN THE LORD JESUS,

I RECEIVED your kind epistle, and do most sincerely thank you for the same, and shall comply with your request, for I feel a pleasure in so doing; and should I give too much scope to my pen, I hope you will pardon it. To proceed. My parents being professors of religion, I was early brought to attend on the word preached, under the Rev. D—— B——. He being a Calvinist

Calvinist dissenter, (and I believe he preached the doctrines of the gospel clearly) I sat under him till I was in my twentieth year; but it was from constraint, and not out of any love to it. But during all these years I attained to no degree of knowledge of the doctrines I heard; and I believe that the heathens, who never saw a bible nor heard the word, could not be more blind and ignorant than I was.

But, at the end of this period of time, one Lord's day Mr. B—— preached from these words, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." As he went on treating of the first part, I found my attention drawn to it, and saw that I was interested in the subject; and I do believe there never was a truer description given of the fall of man, as far as it could be conveyed from light received from the letter of the word, than he gave at that time: it made me tremble from head to foot. I believed the report; and clearly did he shew how fallen man was under the curse of the law, and, as such, obnoxious to the wrath of God; and conscience made the application by bearing this testimony, "Thou art the man." He then treated largely on free grace, and salvation by Christ, and shewed that it was only for sinners that Christ died, and that this salvation became ours by believing. I shall not enlarge on his sermon, but tell you that these last tidings made my very heart leap for joy. I
thought,

thought, yea I had not a doubt, but I was one of those that Christ died for, because I now saw myself a sinner. On this ground I commenced a believer; and I came from under the sermon with light on the whole plan of salvation, and as firm a confidence of my own personal interest therein as a poor creature could have. For two nights I could not close my eyes, my joys did rise so high; and all the free invitations and unconditional promises of the gospel kept flowing into my mind. I thought I was in a new world; the world was now nothing to me, and I wanted to die, that I might be out of it. I could not pay the least attention to any worldly affairs for three weeks. I once went to Mr. B——, and told him how his ministry had been blessed to me, and we rejoiced together; and my wonderful conversion was blazed abroad far and near. I sat under his ministry, I think, about six years.

My joys at length were not quite so high. After the time mentioned above they began to abate, which I thought to be strange; but I went to my father, and told him how it was with me, and he told me that all those who were walking in the ways of God found it so, and I should only maintain and keep my comfort in a way of religion. Indeed he was a good nurse to me, and very high I was in his esteem, but not more so than he was in mine. I had no small share of joy, at seasons, for the space of a year and an half. About this
time

time these words were brought suddenly to my mind, and that with power : “ And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.” I was much perplexed at this, and thought what rod had I got to pass under ? And I thought I was safe enough in the bond of the covenant already. However, about six months after this I was visited with severe afflictions, which so weakened my tabernacle, and the faculties of my soul, that at times I was incapable of thinking, contemplating, or any thing else. But this I conjectured to be the fulfilment of the first part of the foregoing promise which the Lord sent to me. From that time my joys declined ; but my confidence still remained unshaken as to the reality of the work. At times I can recollect that there was something within me that would whisper that “ all was not right at the bottom.” But this voice was soon hushed and smothered, by being attributed to other causes, viz. the devil and the power of unbelief, which I was taught to resist. Indeed, I had so many to build me up in this my confidence, that it was no wonder I stood my ground ; and I had as high an opinion of myself as others had of me, which only fed my pride. Having sat under the aforesaid instrument about six years, he left his charge to take another ; and in his stead came the Rev. G——T——. He was (to my view) as sound in the doctrines of the gospel as the other, and I much approved

approved of his ministry, and sat under it, I think, about four years. At this time I married, and Providence fixed my habitation in this place, where I sat under the ministry of J—— M——, and was much delighted with the same; as he was not inferior to him I left. After some time I heard that Mr. Jenkins preached in a very singular way; but, as I heard he preached the doctrines of the gospel, I thought I would go and hear him; for I assure you from these I never deviated in judgment, for all my religion lay in the belief of them. But I now know that my religion would not stand the fiery test. But sure, if it had been God's genuine work, it could not have been overthrown; for what he does is done for ever. But a stormy wind has rent this wall; and when it fell there was not left so much as one stone upon another that was not thrown down. O Sir! to think how many that are called shepherds, and whole flocks under them, are resting short of the things that accompany salvation, is a sore trial to me. But I must leave this part of the Saviour's government with him who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working; but cannot get rid of my feelings for those who are so near to me. Adieu; and may God reward your kindness to the chiefest of all sinners. So prays

Yours in the hope of the gospel,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

To

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST,

Yours came safe to hand; and I have considered it, and I will by no means say that the Lord God of Israel had no hand in the work described in your narrative. But this I must confess, that evangelical repentance, which to my view is essential to salvation, is not in the account. The new wine was put into an old bottle; and, where this is the case, pride will burst the bottle, and the wine will run out, and the old bottle must perish. I mean, that your joys were not received into an humble, broken, and contrite heart. God hath promised to give us a new heart, as well as a new spirit; and, when the new wine is put into a new bottle, both are preserved. However, the stony heart shall be taken away, and it shall be destroyed, as well as the other parts of the body of sins, for our old man was crucified with Christ; and, under the operation of the Spirit's renewing power, the body of sins shall be put off.

Repentance is two-fold, legal and evangelical. The former is extorted by fears, terror, and torment, and is always attended with hard thoughts of God, and self-pity. This is all the repentance
that

that can be produced in us under the law, where we have nothing before our eyes but our own sins, and a sin-avenging God. Evangelical repentance is drawn forth and flows out under the sweet operations of pardoning love, and is attended with a believing view of him whom we have pierced, and with mourning for him; and this is accompanied with a justifying of God, and sympathising with and condoling a suffering Saviour, and with self-abhorrence: and so it is written, "From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and then ye shall remember your own evil ways, which were not good; and you shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities when I am pacified toward you." God appearing pacified, and we filled with self-lothing, is the finishing work when God brings a soul into covenant with him. He accepts us in the Beloved; the atonement applied purges us from our filthiness; and God shines pacified, reconciled, and well pleased, in the face of Jesus Christ. All repentance but this needs to be repented of, but this never does; for Christ is exalted to give this repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins; and this repentance is unto life, and is attended with purifying faith. The very text that was sent to you informed you that the humbling rod, and the bond of the covenant, were wanting in your experience. The rod of

God is smiting us with terrors, horrors, flashes of divine anger, reproofs, rebukes, the lashes of conscience, bitter reflections, and smiting us with the application of the threatenings and sentences of a broken law, and with the fore buffetings of Satan, and the killing stings and remorse of guilt. To come into the bond of the covenant is to have the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us. The work on you seems to me to be very much like that of Hezekiah, much joy and confidence. And no wonder; for at that time he knew nothing of the plague of his own heart; but, when God shewed him this, his joy, confidence, and hopes, all sunk together: "I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world: he will cut me off with pining sickness; from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me." Isa. xxxviii. 11, 12. And, indeed, nothing will hide pride from our eyes but an abiding sense of our own depravity, and of the superabounding and undeserved mercy of God in Christ Jesus to us. May this religion ever rest with thee and me. So prays

Thy friend and servant in Christ Jesus,

NOCTUA AURITA.

The Desert.

A CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER I.

To PHILOMELA, on the Spray, Mount Tabor.

THE long, cold, dreary winter of my beloved sister in God is past; the dismal cloud of mount Sinai, which hath long rained its entangling snares on thy soul, is now over and gone; the hiding place from the impending storms, and the covert from the dreadful tempest, is found at last; "being wet with the showers of the mountains, she hath embraced the rock for want of a shelter." "He was angry with me," says Philomela; "but his anger is turned away, and he comforts me." "In his favour is life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

"The flowers appear on the earth, the time of finging of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Israel buds and blossoms as the rose; the lilies of the valley ap-

pear among the thorns; those that have long lain, self-condemned, among the pots and potsherds of the earth, obtain the wings of a dove, and their feathers shine with burnished gold, while the voice of the turtle bemoans his mate. "Nor will he deliver the soul of his turtle dove unto the multitude of the wicked, nor forget the congregation of his poor for ever." Psalm lxxiv. 19. Two turtle doves were always offered together under the old dispensation; but one was never offered alone. Jesus died not alone; we were crucified with him. How precious is the sacrifice of a crucified Saviour to poor perishing sinners! and how precious is the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart to Christ Jesus! These were both offered up, and they will ever go together; as in type, so in truth. The voice of the heavenly turtle is heard and understood; and his approving and commanding voice to his mate is, "O my dove, that art in the cleft of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs! Let me see thy countenance; let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Love in the heart ravishes him, and truth on the tongue charms his blessed ears; while a cheerful countenance, reflected from a joyful conscience, carries all before it, and holds him a willing and a joyful captive to the charms of a mortal's affections: "The King is held in the galleries." How humbling, how condescending, is the King of kings, and
 Lord

Lord of lords, to bow the heavens and come down to manifest himself, and pay his divine visits to rebels, to criminals in chains, who are shut up in unbelief, in legal bondage, and in the strong holds of sin and Satan ! But he comes ; and “ his reward is with him, and his work before him.” He enters and takes possession of the purchase of his own blood, and rejoices over the trophy of his own victory ; separates the objects of his choice from among the rest of the captives, and espouses the foreigner. What a brilliant train of glory, majesty, and power, attend him when the everlasting doors are lifted up, and the King of glory enters in ! Then we bow to his sceptre, submit to his easy yoke, embrace the heavenly proclamation, and, with joy unspeakable, come over to the divine standard ; while the banner, that he has given to them that fear him, is displayed, that his beloved may be delivered from that fear and torment that is more bitter than death. How wonderful are his works to the children of men ! The clay lies passive in the hand of the potter, while he forms the broken pitcher into another vessel, as it seemeth good unto the potter to make it. He enlightens the understanding to behold his beauty, suitableness, and worth ; he renews the mind, writes the law of faith in it, and entertains it with heavenly things ; he binds up the broken heart, and sheds abroad his love in it ; he purges the conscience, and endows it with

everlasting peace, and the witness of our adoption; he informs the judgment, and inclines the will to choose, embrace, and hold fast, the better part, that cannot be taken from us. Truth, in the love of it, flows in, and the promises flow in with their richest blessings, in all their sweetness, power, love, and joy unspeakable; while the blessed and adorable Comforter opens them up, explains them, and applies them as nails, fastened by the Master of assemblies. He also helps our infirmities in prayer, testifies of Jesus, and of our interest in him, and fills both heart and mouth with a thousand thanks, blessings, and praises. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."

O could we continue in this mount without the company of Moses and Elias! This would be heaven on earth. But, alas! how often is this sweet enjoyment of his company interrupted. So fearful is the soul of offending, lest he should awake and depart; what weeping, praying, cleaving, and struggling to hold fast, when he is about to withdraw; and what tormenting anxiety, when gone, for fear he should return no more! Then comes that wicked counsellor, that enemy of all righteousness, with a "Where is now thy God?" But he returns again and again, according to his appointed times of life, and revives and renews his visits and his work, saying, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will

I gather

I gather thee; in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but, with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer." So speaks the great Jehovah; so sings Philomela; so I must subscribe.

But the arch enemy will lay many traps for thee in thy new and glorious connexion, in thine exalted state, and in the happy enjoyment of that dignity to which thou art so unexpectedly preferred. And, as thou hast been so long habituated to the legal embraces of Moses, thou wilt find a self-righteous spirit within, that will at all times bend thee that way; and there will be a cleaving to him, notwithstanding all the hard treatment thou hast met with from him. His first wife was a Cushite, or Ethiopian; and all are black, but none comely, to this day, that are wedded to him. Contending, finding fault, cursing, and accusing, are all that can be expected by those who sue not out a divorce from him. His embraces gender nothing but bondage to fear; and all conception by him is followed with endless soul-travail and fruitless labour; and the whole issue is "fruit unto death," and nothing else.

No wedding garment, no ring, no beautiful feet with shoes, ornament those who abide by the side of that husband. "A bloody husband art thou unto me," says the Cushite, "because of the circumcision." Then she is sent back; and how long she remained in widowhood I know not,

However, her father brought her to him again in the wilderness; for I do not read that he ever went after her himself; and what became of her afterwards, none know. I think he starved her to death: for Moses gave them not the true bread from heaven; they ate manna, and are dead. John vi. 32, 49. And I think that he hath starved all the wives that he hath had since; and, if at any time he gets a little comfort in his own heart, which makes him appear with a bright and cheerful countenance, he is sure to put a veil over his face, that nobody may look to the end of it but himself. 2 Cor. iii. 13. There is no such thing as living with him, nor with any of his family. What a life had our poor venerable mother Sarah all the time that Hagar was in her tent! She wanted to be the princess, though she was in bonds; and expected that her spurious son would have been heir both of the promises and of the home-stall, till, by an order from the higher powers, they were both banished from the pavilion, which was to be inhabited by the legitimate offspring of the free woman. But, notwithstanding all that I have said, thou wilt get into these legal embraces, veiled, blinded, bound, straitened, barren, lifeless, peevish, fretful, rebellious, hardened; yea, and thou wilt even cleave to these things, as soon as ever the best Beloved hides his face, withdraws, and provokes thee to jealousy, in order to try thy love, thy faithfulness, and thine attachment to him; not that he
may

may know how thou wilt behave, but that thou mayest know what he hath done for thee; and that, by his going and coming, by his absence and his presence, thou mayest come to a more perfect knowledge of him, and at a more familiar acquaintance with him. At his departure the old man will shew his head; and when the Lord visits thee he will creep into his holes; for he is truly a night-bird. He cannot endure the light, nor shew his head where divine consolations abound. But, as soon as ever the good man takes his bag of money with him, and withdraws from his spouse, then the owls, bats, and evening wolves, creep forth; but, when the sun arises, they lay themselves down in their dens. At such times we must pray, watch, wait, and look, even "from the lion's dens, and from the mountains of the leopards;" for at these seasons the legal spirit works in a very unobserved way. The soul sensibly feels its loss; its love, joy, and comfort, abated. Consequently it doth not perceive the Lord, as usual, working in it both to will and to do. What is it then? Why, if he be not working in us, we must work for him. Then corruptions rise up, and interrupt us in the performance of our task. At this anger rises; then conscience accuses; then unbelief prevails, and hardness of heart and rebellion follow; and the wrath and the bondage of the law come on, and hold fast; and now we are discontented, and fret at every thing, even against

the Lord himself. The more discontented we are, in our deserted state, the more we strive, being driven with a hasty spirit; and the more we strive, the faster we are bound; till the light of his blessed countenance darts another healing ray, and the voice of peace rebukes and becalms the storm. Then the Lord returns with double love, and we dissolve in double gratitude. Now Moses holds his peace, and is content. The lion sculks off to his thicket, and the old man faints and dies once more, while we look to the cross. The nails pierce him, the spear lays at him, the cancelled debt-book silences him, and God, shining reconciled in the face of Christ, banishes him. Our old man is crucified with him: but crucifixion is a long lingering death, and the old man dies hard. He is of the same lineage, and in the same state, as the devil his father; both are condemned, both cursed, both are destroyed; and yet both are in being, and we know it to our sorrow. God was with Judah, and they drove the Canaanites out of the mountains; but they could not drive them out of the vallies, because they had chariots of iron. To keep them out of the mind and affections is a great thing; but to root them out of the heart is a work not to be done till we engage the last enemy; I mean death; for, though there is no discharge from that war, yet there will be a full discharge when that war is over; and then there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house

house of the Lord of hosts. This encounter completes the victory, and the crown awaits the conquerors. Sin and death entered the first paradise, but both shall be debarred the second. The first Adam let them in, and the last Adam shall drive them out. O long looked-for, blessed, and happy day, when and where the inhabitants shall no more say, " I am sick ! " Where " sorrow and fighting shall flee away." Where we shall see the lustre of a million suns, who shall shine on us, and shine through us, and with all his fulness satisfy us, and that for ever and ever. So prays

Thy ready servitor

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER II.

To NOCTUA AURITA, of the Desert.

I RECEIVED your very kind letter; and may the Lord reward your labour of love to me, one of the most unworthy creatures that ever the Lord condescended to work upon. All that you tell me, concerning what are the effects of cleaving

cleaving to Moses, I have found in my own experience, in the course of two months before my journey to Gaffon's Bower. It is a mystery to me how I got there. But the Lord blessed the conversation I had with you the morning we all walked in the fields together, and gave me light to see how I was entangled; and I believe Satan will never bring me into that snare again. He must come in a different way the next time, if ever he gets me there again; which God in his mercy prevent! However, I am not at that mount now, and dread the thoughts of ever going there again. I know the Lord sent you to Gaffon's Bower, and me too. It was a happy season to my soul, for the Lord was with us. If you recollect, I told you a dream I had had, which I was sure was from the Lord. What was most remarkable in the dream, the sabbath-day's portion, that you said to me (in my dream) I should enjoy; and I dreamt that you tried to encourage and to comfort me under the sore trial I was then in. It was above ten days before you came down that I had the dream. I knew I had lost what was dearer to me than all the world; I mean that nearness to God, and communion with him, which I had once enjoyed. But the other part of my dream was something I was expecting the enjoyment of; and my expectation has not been cut off, as you will see by what I will relate to you. I had not set out on my journey to Gaffon's Bower one hour

before I felt such a spirit of uniting love flow into my heart to those that were with me, and to those I expected to meet, as I have not words to express; and your sermon that evening in the barn was a seal and confirmation of all that I had felt. It was the new commandment indeed, written with the finger of God on my heart. And, as I said before, a happy season I had. Moses' bands began to burst, for I could be holden no longer with them; and from Elijah's cave in the wilderness I was brought, and God has put me into the cleft of the rock, the sweet place you told me of. I find it is a sweet place; for he is making all his goodness to pass before me, and proclaiming his name to be merciful and gracious, &c.: and what I now enjoy can be nothing less than an earnest of that rest in endless glory which the sabbath-day is a type of. And therefore the words which you told me in my dream are fulfilled; for I do enjoy "a sabbath-day's portion." The Lord is pouring down such a blessing, that there is not room to receive it. I want my coast enlarged. Jabez prayed for it, and had it; and, my dear friend, do ask it for me; for I must be enlarged, or die under it, and that God knows. Surely this is singing in the heights of Zion, and feeding on the high places. I hope the Lord will never remove me from this cleft of the rock till he takes down this clay tabernacle, which I feel to be such a clog as I never felt it before. What I enjoy is something

thing more than faith and hope, though these abide; but it is the greatest of all, which is charity, or love. But, though it is thus with me, I know that Satan is very near to me, and would deprive me of all, if he could. I feel such fiery darts from him, at times, as I have never experienced before. But he is not permitted to hurt me. Christ was manifested in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil. I did grieve sadly at something you said in your letter; it was this: your saying I should be at the old work of cleaving to Moses again and again. But I shall certainly die to him and his law; and that has been predicted to me in another dream, which I had the night before last. It was this:—I dreamed I was from home in a friend's house. A person came in to me, and told me I was dead, and wanted me to go with him to see my corpse, which was at a house a little distance off. I was moved with indignation against him, and told him I was heartily glad I was dead, for I had plague enough of myself all my life-time, and would not move one step to view my own corpse; and that any body might have the trouble of my funeral that pleased. Perhaps this will be fulfilled when I can say, with Paul, "I, through the law, am dead to the law." Pardon my troubling you so much about dreams; for, when I write to you, I cannot write only what I feel. I hope we shall see you soon. I have every indulgence

gence heart can wish ; I mean that of attending on his Majesty's heralds, whose glorious orations are remarkably blessed to me. Surely " the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage." I assure you, when we all get together we talk much about you. I know we all feel much soul union to you. Pray remember our little sister Moorhen ; you know she has no breasts. She has received your kind epistle, and thanks you for it ; but she wonders how you found out her case, as she never has told you. I must now conclude, hoping to hear from you soon ; and believe me to remain

Your very sincere and affectionate

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER III.

To PHILOMELA, of the King's Dale.

I HAVE just received mine own with usury. The bee found its way to my hive with wax on its legs, and honey in its bag. The promised land still flows with this delicious fare. Eat as much of it as doth thee good ; for such is
the

the knowledge of wisdom when it enters the heart; " then there shall be a reward, and thine expectation shall not be cut off." I am a tenant at will; and every little wind that shakes the cottage I am ready to take as a warning to quit, which will hasten my arrival at the better house " not made with hands." And I am the more inclined to entertain such thoughts, as our Israel at large begin to loath the manna, calling the weightier matters light food. For such conduct the divine resentment may justly appear; yea, and will appear, to send " a famine in the land, and cleanness of teeth throughout all their tribes." The numberless clouds without rain, which are blown to and fro with every wind, throughout all our coasts, are certain preludes to this evil arrow; for " they will make empty the soul of the hungry, and cause the drink of the thirsty to fail." But even this shall not deprive me of my crown, nor screen their backs from God's scourge. How light are these bodily afflictions when the dying love of Jesus affords to the weary mind a downy pillow! " I will keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me." This is making all our bed easy in our sickness, and is the sweetest rest to the soul on the bed of languishing.

It is true the eye of faith, in the rays of the Morning Star, perceives the day-dawn and day-spring from on high inclined to visit; and the soul struggles hard to quit the dark and gloomy regions

regions of death's shadow. As the radiance of immortal glory spreads, the more precious is it for the eye of faith to behold the sun. This is seeing Him who is invisible to all the sight of mortals, or to all the light of nature. The goodness of Jehovah appears in the land of the living; faith perceives it, and draws her unerring conclusion to the enlightened mind, that "he is the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." The heavenly dawn shines upon obscure prophecy, and illumines that dark place, and brings divine harmony to light, where carnal reason had bred the worst confusion. Confidence puts her hand on divine veracity, and waits till faithfulness makes the promise good. And here the soul faints unless she believes. But the heavenly dove flutters in the heart, broods over the soul, and produces hope and expectation, which are both the soul's anchor and looker-out: the former stays her from sinking in her fainting fits, and the other fills her with anxiety till the desire is accomplished. Thus faith sees the promised object at a distance, and a divine impulse on the will bends it to make the choice, until the immortal seed of electing and everlasting love is shed abroad in the heart by the promised Comforter; and then the affections are all called forth to acquiesce in and to admire the choice. Now the Ancient of Days, and the child whose age is an hand-breadth, are no more at a distance. The Sun of Righteousness and the worm

worm of the dust meet together, without any danger of being scorched or dried up. He presents his suffering nature to view, and shines through it; darkness passes, and the true light shines; while the eye sees, the ear hears, and faith feels the word of life. O how melting, how humbling, how soul and self-debasing, is the vision! And, when it speaks in the court of conscience, then "the just shall live by faith." There is no more spirit left; all, all is drunk up, and crucifixion takes place; fellowship in his sufferings, and being planted together in the likeness of his death, is both felt and understood; and the effect is, the world becomes crucified in the vision, and the sinner is crucified to the world. This is manifesting himself on earth to the objects given him; and, when he awakes, arises, and ascends again, he takes the heart, the affections, the thoughts, the desires, wishes, appetites, and all the powers of the soul, with him, and leaves us as mere shadows without substance, machines without wheels, or as automaton figures. We may speak, and that is all; and sometimes not that. Whether in the body or out of the body we cannot tell; God knoweth. The match is made, the knot is tied, and Philomela is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord my God. The bond of the covenant has encompassed her; and all that he loves must live; for the true light always conveys dying love, which is his healing beams. All light,
unattended

unattended with this, is short of the saving health promised to all nations; for there is neither salvation, health, nor life, in it. Bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, and one spirit with him, and complete in him, and without fault before the throne; these are great mysteries. But I speak concerning my master and mistress, whose willing servant I hope ever to remain. Signed and delivered

From the Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER IV.

To NOCTUA AURITA, of the Desert.

I RECEIVED yours, and my heart rejoiced when I saw the hand-writing. I know the Lord will reward you for your labour of love to my soul. It grieved me much to find you was laid by from your work. I hope ere this you are about again; for I verily believe the Lord will not keep you a prisoner long, because, under him, there are so many that are looking to you for food, and there are so few under shepherds to feed them. Last week the Lord was pleased to visit my taber-

nacle with a disorder which I had some apprehension would have taken me home. But he has brought me back again; for what end I am at a loss to know. I want to be gone. I know there is a mansion prepared for me, and that nothing shall ever separate me from his presence, who is the life and joy of my soul. I know now what you meant in the first letter you sent me, after my fetters were broken off. It has much puzzled me till lately. You said that *faith* was come to me by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and that faith would shortly work by love; and that love would cast out all fear and torment, and then the match would take place. Indeed I find it so; for I very sensibly feel the effects of union to Christ. Well might the apostle break out in wonder, and say, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." But we shall know more of it when, as you observe, we shall see the lustre of a million suns, which will smile on us, burn in us, and shine through us, for evermore. These expressions, as it were, set my soul on fire. But these words come to my mind, where the apostle says, "Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye may inherit the promises." And I believe no soul ever needed patience more than myself. I find you will not let me enjoy my sweet morsel without the "bitter herbs;" you must bring to my remembrance

membrance " the wormwood and the gall " my soul felt under Moses' yoke. I verily believe that such a man as you can certainly divine ; and therefore do believe what you say. But I am not there yet ; no, I am in the banqueting-house, and his banner over me is love. I assure you my mortal part can hardly support under it. I know my body is much weakened, which is the reason, I think, that the Lord will not keep me here long ; for I seem to live entirely above. I have enjoyed much satisfaction in the company of the citizen who was lately at the vicarage. I feel union of heart with him. He seems truly contrite. I pray the Lord to appear for him, and heal the breaches which are made in his spirit, and restore to him health and cure. I hope we shall see you ere long in the King's dale. Your kind expressions of love in Christ Jesus towards us I really believe, for you have shewn it ; and I am sure that the same bond holds us to each other that holds us to Christ our head. His Majesty's herald, I believe, is well. My soul was sweetly fed yesterday under his excellent oration. I wished him to continue his sound till midnight. I believe I should not have fallen down with sleep. He brought forth milk and strong meat, that each might have a portion in due season. I really think he has had much of the power and presence of God with him ever since the meeting of our solemn assembly in the *barn* and the *bower*. Every time the Lord sends

you among us you confirm and strengthen the work on our souls done by the King's herald. So you see that self-interest is one motive of our wishing to see you. However, I believe one may say for many, that we love you dearly in the Lord Jesus as you do us. I should be glad to hear from you as soon as convenient. My other half desires to be kindly remembered to you. Must conclude, and remain

Your affectionate friend and sister

in the Lord Jesus Christ,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER V.

To PHILOMELA, of the King's Dale.

BELoved of God, thine epistle came safe to hand. The tidings are good; and God appears faithful, true, good, gracious, merciful, loving, kind, and tender; mindful of his covenant, and pitiful to self-lost, self-condemned,
and

and self-despairing finners. The bitterness of death is past, the sackcloth is put off, and the best robe is put on. He hath loosed "the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." The strong hold of Satan is demolished, the prison of unbelief has yielded up its prisoner of hope, and she that sat in darkness shews herself. Wonderful is the resurrection of the soul under the Spirit's quickening and comforting operations. When a sense of divine wrath, the intolerable burden of guilt, the spirit of heaviness, begin to be removed from off the soul; when despondency, dejection, and terrible apprehensions, begin to subside; the mind sweetly ascends, and every captivated and enraptured thought ascend with it. Attracting love from above draws the affections to the right hand of the Majesty on high; while faith deals with dying love and all-atoning blood, hope casts her anchor within the veil; when charity casts out every let and hindrance, together with every rival, and paves the way for the best Beloved to yield to an undissolved union, to knit the marriage knot, and become one spirit with the dear-bought soul. O wonder of wonders! Adieu.

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER VI.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I HAVE not words to express my thankfulness for the favours you are heaping upon me. My debt is increasing, and I have nothing to pay. But I do verily believe that my dear Redeemer will give you a full reward. Blessed be his name, he does give me a heart to pray for it; "and he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, because the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, according to the will of God." Your letter came as a broad seal to all that I had experienced from the Monday till Thursday evening in the week following, when I received yours. During those days my union to Christ was made as clear to me as ever I saw the sun at noon-day. What I felt in my soul of the effects of dying love no tongue nor pen can ever express. The godly sorrow it produced in my heart melted it. The Lord did give me to look on him whom I had pierced, and mourn; and this dissolved my stony heart, and broke it in a thousand pieces. The three verses of Mr. Hart's hymn on the Prodigal quite overcame me, viz.

The

The prodigal's return'd,
 Th' apostate bold and base,
 Who all his Father's counsels spurn'd,
 And long abus'd his grace.

What treatment since he came?
 Love tenderly exprest.
 What robe is brought to hide his shame?
 The best, the very best.

Rich food the servants bring,
 Sweet music charms his ears:
 See what a beauteous costly ring
 The beggar's finger wears.

My joy and godly sorrow kept increas'ing; and on Tuesday following it rose so high, that I was incapable of attending to the domestic concerns of my family. I could only go about the house saying, "Lord, I cannot live so; I cannot, cannot. Do take me. Thou knowest I cannot bear up under such manifestations of dying love." Surely I was drunk with the new wine of the kingdom. The Lord did make me so to drink as to forget my poverty, and to remember my misery no more. Surely the Lord is preparing me for something; but what I know not. However, I am persuaded I shall not be led in this way long; but am quite in the dark what will be my path next. I think he is either preparing me for glory, or I shall be exercised with some fiery trial. However, what I experienced this last month I believe no temptation that I shall be exercised with will ever erase

it from my mind. I know now that Christ is mine, and that nothing shall ever separate me from him. I am saying with the spouse, "A bundle of myrrh is my Beloved unto me; he shall lie all night between my breasts." I am truly glad to hear, by a friend, that you are better, and able to follow the plough. May the Lord crown your labours with success, that the fallow ground of sinners' hearts may be prepared for the reception of the precious seed, that the incarnate Word may be formed in many hearts! I shall be happy to see you. I hope it will not be long before I have that pleasure. I saw the King's herald last night: he was well. I believe he rejoices to see my happiness. May the Lord bless and prosper him! The power that came down upon us at Gaffon's Bower seems still to remain, both with him and us. Surely that was a time never to be forgotten. Our dear sister Moorhen begs me to present her kind love to you, and she thanks you for your kind letter; but says you give her too much encouragement, and she is afraid she shall never be able to write to you again; but desires me not to forget to tell you that she loves you dearly for the work of God upon you. I think we may say of her, as Christ said of Nathanael when he saw him coming to him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" My very soul cleaves to her. Precious she is to me, and dear to the Lord, I have no doubt. I shall be happy to hear from you as soon

soon as convenient. I hope the Shunamite's continually coming will not weary you. Let me continue to have an interest in your prayers. I believe I never stood in more need of them; for I think that Satan is enraged at me, and perhaps is laying some snare for my feet. Pray that the Lord would give me wisdom, that I may not be ignorant of his devices. My paper tells me to leave off. Believe me ever to remain

Your very sincere and affectionate friend

and sister in the bonds of the gospel,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER VII.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

THY favourable, unctuous, and rapturous epistle is safely arrived. Nothing now (since the operations of her late banquet on dying love, and her godly sorrow, and her kind reception) seems to be wanting to complete the glorious

rious work of conversion, regeneration, and espousing to Christ. Her eyes have seen that Just One; and she has wept the tears of heavenly love over him in his dolorous sufferings, which hath been attended with a most joyful and assured sense of pacification; and the blessed effects were self-loathing, and such self-abhorrence as is not to be described. This is a secret which is peculiar to the elect of God, when the eternal union between Christ and the espoused soul takes place; and is what no hypocrites ever attained, and what no minister of the letter could ever describe. Nothing now seems to be lacking in my dear sister's faith; she comes behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of the Son of God. She comprehends, with all saints that have gone before, both the height and depth of boundless love, which passeth knowledge. The Lord hath given her his sure tokens, and the things that accompany salvation; so that in all things she hath proved herself clear in this great matter. Henceforth there can be no enchantment against Philomela; no divination against this daughter of Abraham. I certainly shall, according to my first prediction, see her in the kingdom of God above. This soul-dissolving union, this fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death in it, is the most noble, the most soul-enriching and soul-establishing work of the holy Spirit of promise; and the sensations of the soul under it

7

produces

produces the choicest experience that ever raised a soul to hope. It sifts things to the bottom, and brings all things, yea even life and immortality itself, to light in the soul. The poor sinner appears in all his worst colours, and Jesus the fairest among ten thousand. Not an angel in heaven was ever favoured with such a view, nor is there an angel in heaven that ever felt such a sensation; for Christ took not on him their nature, nor were they ever espoused to him. O the unparalleled meekness, contrition, submission, and resignation, that is felt in the heart of the poor creature when the ring, the robe, and the fatted calf, are brought forth! How the soul is settled and fixed, so as not to leave room for a doubt, a scruple, an if, or a but; for it is assuring us, and sealing us up to the day of eternal redemption.

The Lord certainly is preparing thee for something, my sister. And wouldst thou know what it is? Why, "Abraham made a great feast the day that Isaac was weaned." After this the breast is put up, and a little *bitter aloes* is rubbed upon it, inasmuch that every sweet drop is followed with bitterness, which I call one of the worst perfumes that scent the Saviour's robes: "All his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia." Thy last letter explained the *myrrh*, which is love, for that always stands first; and *aloes* is the next to it, which thy next letter will smell of more or less. Ezekiel's roll and John's little book had these
 compositions

compositions in them. You may call them bitter sweets; for they both agree in their confessions upon this matter: "It was in my mouth sweet as honey, and when I had eaten it my [heart] belly was bitter." When the suckling times are over, the lamb is taken out of the bosom and turned adrift, being ordered to go behind, and to follow the shepherd. This treatment is dreadful, and what was never expected. And now, instead of the word affording sincere milk, it is a dry breast. The little one finds no spoon meat, no bearing upon the sides, no kisses from the lips, no smiles from the face, no answers to their request.

"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." And all this is true. But the mother puts the last child down upon its feet among the rest, to make room upon the knee for the new comer. "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it. In simplicity be ye children, but in understanding be men." Ay, says Philomela; but my soul desires the first ripe fruit. What shall I do when there is no cluster to eat? Ay, but there is food: "I will send pastors after my own heart, that shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Not so: "How can the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?" True: "But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days."

But

But is he not to gather the lambs with his arms, and to carry them in his bosom? Yes: but, after they are one year old, they are not called *lambs*, but *sheep*.

“ The rams of Nebaioth must minister unto him.” When he puts forth his own sheep he goes before them, and they must hearken to his voice, and follow him. But those that are ewes, great with young, must rely on his power, and hang by his hand; for he leads those. But the lambs, which are under a year old, are, in the general, put in the bosom, under the shepherd’s cloke, while the love of the shepherd’s heart keeps them warm, and the girdle of faithfulness and truth bears them up. But after this they are put among the rest of the flock, and taken to the fold, upon the heights of Israel, where their fold is to be.

A man newly married, according to the old law, was to cheer up his wife for one year, and not to be charged with war. But, after this, war and business must be followed, and other young virgins must enjoy their espousals. But O how shall I endure to see the younger daughters espoused, and enjoying their heavenly nuptials, if I should be left to serve, without a smile, without one propitious look, from that Sweet One, who hath left me like a silly dove without a heart! Love-sickness would bring me to my grave, and jealousy would scorch me in the injured lover’s flames.

flames. I, who have been as a tabret, and banquetted in the wine-cellar so long, shall I ever come, in my love-sickness, to beg a drop or an apple of the young daughters of Zion? or to say, "Stay me with flagons, for I am sick of love?"

It all lies in the following prophecy: "For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, faith thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee." When this comes to pass, rebellion, jealousy, rage, &c. with every other corruption, will rise up and shew themselves with seven heads and ten horns. Ay, says Philomela; but I hope in all this thou wilt be a false prophet. Amen and amen, says

Thine in the Lord Jesus Christ,

In the Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA,

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

SINCE Philomela received your last favour her soul has been vexed within her, and she must shew it to you, because you are made manifest in my conscience to be a true prophet of the Lord. You prophesied, in your last, that my scent must be changed; and that, as my garments had smelled of *myrrh*, the next time I came to you you should discern the *bitter aloes* also. I knew you would not prove a false prophet to me. But I wish to put the evil day far from me; and therefore said I would not believe it till it came upon me. However, Satan laid a snare for me. He knew I had been for some time in the banqueting-house, feasting on the feast of fat things, and wines on the lees, such as he never had a taste of, nor ever will. The dear souls in the dale, who are on my heart to live and die with them, seeing my happiness, and I can keep nothing from them, for freely I receive, and therefore freely I must give, knowing, by experience, that "there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth," and I believe Satan knew that their souls got some good, because

because they covet my company; and therefore he came to me in this manner: he insinuated that my being so open and free to tell them how God dealt with me sprung from nothing but pride, because they should think highly of me; and that, instead of their eyes looking to Christ, they were looking to a creature. I thought I could appeal to conscience it was otherwise; for I knew that, if it were so, it would bring the rod of God upon me in such a manner as they might see what they were trusting to. For a few days I found it a great burden; it made me hate myself. However, I made a resolution that, if my tongue cleaved to the roof of my mouth, I would no more speak to them of what the Lord had done, or was doing, on my soul. This was last Thursday week. On Saturday last one, named Q in the corner, came to see me: she has attended the orations of our herald for some time; and I have often thought there was a weight on her mind, but never could get her to be open. But now she could hold in no longer. She told me she had read several proclamations lately; and she had also observed a particular alteration in my countenance of late. I was silent, which was enough for her; and she said, there was no one she could open her mind to. She enjoined secrecy; but I could make no promises. She gave me such a description of her case, and put such questions to me, that I quite forgot the resolution

I had

I had made of not opening my mouth any more. She dragged every thing out of me that God had done on my soul, from the time I was first wounded, till the Lord broke my fetters. And her soul seemed to be raised to a degree of hope, at least that there might be mercy for her. A deep work it is; not the work of a day, a month, or a year; though God has permitted it to be kept secret, and she is not aware that any soul knows it but myself. She had written two letters to our watchman, but burnt them both. However, I ran with the tidings to him as soon as I could. She cannot keep it much longer from him. After this, it came to my mind that I had passed the bounds of my promise. However, I promised to do so no more. And now you shall know how God dealt with me on Thursday evening after. As soon as the herald had finished his oration, she came to me at Bethel, with such a countenance as I shall never forget. She was too full to speak. My conscience told me she was cut deeper, under the alarm and warning of the watchman of the night, than ever she was before. But I said in my heart I would not speak to her. I only asked her if she was not well; and she went from me. But my conscience smote me, and cut me in a manner I cannot describe. I went home and to bed; but such a night's lodging I had! The devil and conscience made fine work with me, because I had kept my mouth shut to her when I knew she came to me

for sympathy. I think I would have given fifty pounds if I could have got up in the night and gone to her; but she was too far off. However, I found my mind at liberty in the morning to write her a letter, which I did, and sent it her directly. On the feast day at even she came to me again at Bethel, with these words: "I thank you, I thank you; I do not deserve it. O what shall I do! Never was any thing so seasonable. If I could have spoke to you on Thursday night I must have told you that I was sure of being damned. O that I was one of the *marked* ones!" My heart was ready to burst, and I cried to her, "You are one, you are one of them."—"O," says she to me, "you shall hear from me; indeed you shall." My very bowels go out after her. Surely Satan will get the worst of it. May I "remember the battle, and do no more." Job xli. 8. I know it will rejoice your heart to hear of this poor sinner. I think her deliverance is not far off. I find I have filled my paper, therefore can only say, I have found the peace I had lost. I believe you know that I was born again to be
 ♦ troublesome to you. Hope you are well. Pray let me hear from you as soon as you can. I have not said one half I wished to say. The Lord bless you with the best of blessings. So prays

Your affectionate sister in the Lord Jesus,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

*To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale, or
elsewhere.*

THINE epistle came safe to hand, and favours a little of the bitter ingredients mentioned in my last. This article is known to all the family, and to them only; nor doth the stranger intermeddle with its opposite. In my last I shewed thee a little of what would befall thee in thy latter days, lest, when these things come on thee, that thou shouldest think some strange thing had happened unto thee; and, if they should continue long, that thou shouldest grow weary and faint in thy mind. Under the old dispensation, as I hinted before, every one that had built a new house, planted a new vineyard, or that was lately married, was to be free at home, and not to be charged with, nor to be engaged in, any war for one whole year. Thou art now building in the temple of the Lord, and wast lately transplanted into the living vine, and newly married to the soul's best husband, and thy year of jubilee is out about next Christmas; near about which time thou mayest expect, either within or without, the alarms of war. When the captain

of our salvation takes the young recruits into the banqueting-house he hangs the banner of love over their heads, while he unfurls it in their hearts; which seems designed to let them know that, when their bounty is spent, they must prepare for the field of action. Therefore let me advise thee now, whilst thou art in the presence-chamber, and the door of hope is shut about thee; while his throne is accessible, and he is shewing thee his love; while all his secret mysteries are brought to light, his secret treasures opened and brought forth, and his heavenly riches communicated; now, while his ear, his heart, and hand, are all open; now, while the days of his espousals, and the days of the gladness of his heart, continue; and while the bridegroom is with thee, and he tells thee to open thy mouth wide and he will fill it, saying, "What is thy petition, and what is thy request, and it shall be granted thee, even to the whole of the kingdom?" Now, I say, is the time to covet earnestly the best gifts. Seek every love token, ask every needful grace, every blessing, and every gift, that accompanies salvation. Follow after charity, wisdom, righteousness, peace, in all thy petitions; and crave all the promises, in the power of them, which his liberal heart can afford, with respect to future help, need, and preservation; for I must tell thee again, as I have told thee in time past, that "the time will come when ye shall desire to see

one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it." If thou pursue this my counsel, thou wilt be furnished with many powerful pleas in time to come; and, if thou minute down his gracious words and love visits, these would, in some future time, fill thy mouth with arguments. But, alas! thou art too busy. This harvest will be past, and thy sun will be declining; the shadows of the evening will be stretching out, and the trial of faith be coming on. Satan will plunder thy memory of all the sweet promises thou hast obtained. He will address thee as an angel of light, and work upon all the natural and corrupt affections that thou art possessed of; and shall so influence thy natural passions, as that thou shalt even be at a loss to know from whence they come. Then will he sit up, overhaul, and call in question, all this good work; and, while universal charity is flowing in, the best beloved will be drawing off; and then, like a young wanton spendthrift, thou wilt set down and condemn thine own folly and indiscretion for not adopting these measures; for, during the furnace work, there will be only now and then a standing behind the wall, and a glimpse through the lattice, which provokes to jealousy, and, in the general, terminates in fainting fits and love sickness; at which seasons the comeliness of the countenance is much defaced; the ornaments of a meek and quiet spirit sullied; gospel simplicity tarnished; the bowels

of mercy straitened; and, instead of well-set hair, baldness. The tabret becomes a bye-word; conversation loses its savour, and the words their salt. Let me advise thee to provide for thyself a few high heaps of witnesses, and to set up a few private land-marks, which shall serve thee in time to come; for the many that are looking to thee, and emptying thy barrel and cruse, will make thee the keeper of their vineyard; and thou shalt by and by confess that thine own vineyard thou hast not kept. To be open, and to communicate, and to tell others what God hath done for our souls, is right. The woman healed of her issue was called forth before the whole company to confess what she had done, and what had been done in her; and it was approved. When with the heart we believe, with the mouth we must confess; for this is being found to return, and to give glory to God. But to make thine own calling clear, and thine own election sure, is, and ought to be, the principal work, and is laying in a good foundation against the time to come. "When I am old and grey-headed forsake me not, O God of my salvation!" saith the Psalmist. And, if thou dost not lay up for a future famine, future times of drought, or future desertions, thou shalt surely complain, as others have done, "O that it was with me as in months past, when God preserved me, when the Almighty was with me, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle, and when my glory
was

was fresh in me!" Lay this epistle by thee, and read it over seven years hence; and then send me word how many lying predictions are found in this scribble of thine

Affectionate friend and servant,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER X.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

WAS I perfect in the language of Canaan, I could convey to your mind the sensations of love and gratitude I feel in my heart to you for the unparalleled kindness you shew to me in your work of faith and labour of love, in the Lord Jesus, to my soul. You never will know, till we sit down in glory together, what an instrument the Lord makes you of confirming and establishing his work on my soul. However, sure I am that this kindness of yours shall in no wise lose its reward. I think that his Majesty's herald and yourself were both born into this world on

purpose to be useful to me. I received a letter from you last Wednesday, which prophesied of some dark and cloudy days. Sure I am that my old man will procure me a large share of fatherly chastisement. But "to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." To be put and kept at a distance from him whom my soul loves, must be a hell upon earth; and I think will be more severely felt by me now, since I have been indulged with such manifestations of his love to my soul as I have been lately. But there will be a sweetness in it when he shall turn again; for it is but for a small moment he will hide his face; and at that time there will be nothing of that bitter ingredient in it called vindictive wrath. I know you never yet sent me one lying prediction, and I am sure that you never will; for every epistle you have sent me came under the seal of the Spirit of God; and precious they are to my soul, and a valuable treasure I esteem them. Their price is far above rubies, more desirable than fine gold, "sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb." I must now dismiss your first letter, though I could say much more about it, and the effects of it on my mind. But I have much to say about your second letter, which I received on Saturday evening. It caused sleep to depart from my eyes, and slumber from my eyelids; and I was full of tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day. And, had I had the wings of a dove, I should have been at

Paddington

Paddington as early on sabbath-day morning as Mary was at the sepulchre of her dear Lord. The first page of it is a mystery to me. I have not wisdom to understand these words of the wife, and his dark saying, "Thè bee that came to your hive with the wax and honey." I cannot make it out. But it is the "feeling of the wind shaking the cottage," which you think is hastening your arrival at the better house, which filled my heart with sorrow. It made my heart tremble for the ark of God. My mind got a little composed from the Lord's dealings with Israel when he was about to take away Elijah. He did not do it till he had anointed another prophet in his room. As there are so few watchmen that God hath set on the walls of our Zion who can detect an enemy, and give the time of the night, I hope the Lord is not about to leave the city of our assemblies in the hands of blind watchmen, who cannot understand; because he says that "our teachers shall not be moved into a corner any more." From what you say next, in one of yours, I gather that you have some more enemies to encounter. Perhaps you are in perils, according to custom, among false brethren. You speak of many loathing the manna, and calling it light food. This certainly calls for divine judgment. But, as you observe, your crown is sure, because your reward is with your God. Whoever they are that fight against the truth, and the power of it, fight against God.

But

But I can tell you that the thought of your being in trouble drew forth all the sympathetic powers of my soul; and I am sure my feelings have been mingled with yours ever since; and, if it is not too great a favour, may I ask thee to lend me thy key, that I may open this lock, that my mind may be eased; and I should be obliged to you for it as soon as you can. I must speak of the contents of the other part of one of your letters. The second time I read it I cannot describe the sweet ray of light, from God's Spirit, which came on my mind, accompanied with a sweet, melting, humbling frame, which brought me to the feet of Jesus. I found I had the key to that which was my own experience. I could go with you to the end of your letter. You have brought forth all the operations of the love of God on my soul. The effects it produces, and the soul-melting sensations of the poor sinner under it; the crucifixion of him to the world, which takes place as the consequence of it; was greatly blessed to me, as it described my own feelings far better than I could myself. I can with confidence say, that I am planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, and likewise in the likeness of his resurrection. The world and I am well agreed; I am crucified to that, and that is crucified to me; for, as you observe, Jesus has taken with him my heart, affections, thoughts, desires, wishes, and all that is not mortal, and I am now a stranger and a sojourner

3

here,

here, as all my fathers in the faith were. And I have need of much patience to wait my appointed time till my change come. The Lord blefs you, and give you much of his prefence, and of the enjoyment of his eternal love. So prays

Your very fincere and affectionate friend and

sifter in the bonds of the gospel of Christ,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XI.

*To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale, or
elfewhere.*

Long looked-for is come at last:
“ They that fow fhall reap.” But I thought it was almoft four months before the expected harveft came on. Banqueting times take up all the attention; and we know the memory is treacherous. The woman at the well forgot her pitcher; Peter talked he knew not what; and Paul forgot whether his body was in the company or out of it
in

in his flight to paradise. And no wonder, when the new wine of the kingdom goes down so sweetly as to cause "the lips of those that are asleep to speak;" for persons that talk in their sleep are not always consistent. Glad am I to find that my sister continues in the fellowship of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ. She holds fellowship with the Father by a participation of his everlasting love; she has fellowship with Jesus, and walks with him in peace and equity; and has fellowship with the Spirit by the witness he bears with her spirit, and by the cry of Abba, Father; and by the comfort that he communicates, by the promises he applies, and by his kind help against her infirmities at the throne of grace. O happy, happy souls, who rule with God, and are faithful with the saints! How great the condescension of the Most High, who humbleth himself to visit such poor mortals, and to enwrap them in the rays and flames of infinite divinity; and with favour to compass them as with a shield; and to exalt them sensibly into the enjoyment of his omnipresence; where we "see the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off!" In whose reconciling face the Father of all mercies for ever shines, as well pleased; and shines with approbation, complacency, and delight, as propitious, and as the fountain of all grace, mercy, and peace; "while we look as through a glass darkly, and are changed into the same

same image;" renewed in knowledge, and blessed with righteousness and true holiness; in which image the mind goes from glory to glory; from the glory of one perfection to the glorious discovery of another, till we see all his divine attributes meet, centre, and harmonize together, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to the glory of God in the salvation of souls. This, this is the religion of Jesus, and God's mystery among the Gentiles. Enthroned in our affections, he reigns unrivalled; and there he sways his righteous sceptre, and spreads the beams of immortal light. "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." All the poor sinner's thoughts are brought into sweet captivity; tranquillity and peace are the blessed fruits and effects of his glorious and undisturbed reign; while the poor from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, inherit the blessings of his throne, and the flourishing felicity of his mild government, and admire the order of it, the justice and equity of it, the execution of his laws, and the regard that he pays to truth in every branch of his administration. This, my sister, is the kingdom of God, and the empire of all-conquering grace, which banishes the infernal usurper from the heart, and divests him of his dark panoply, in which he trusted, and by which the objects of Heaven's choice are long kept in slavery: "Other lords have had dominion over us; but now, by thy power, will we make mention of thy name."

name." In righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, stands the glorious reign of the King of kings, which rescues helpless souls from the triple reign of Satan, sin, and death. But how little is this religion known in our day! How few that preach the kingdom of God! and how few that are acquainted with that power in which this kingdom stands! And why should the Ancient of Days reveal and make these things known to us, who are as sheep that no man taketh up; as the off-scouring of the earth, whom none sought after or cared for? Shut up in the dark regions, and laid in irons; hated, as we thought, by both worlds, and condemned to perpetual drudgery; reprobated, as I once believed, from eternity; cursed from the womb, and doomed to destruction! But our thoughts were not God's thoughts. We were not to die till we had seen the Lord's Christ. The vision was to speak in us; and we were appointed to look at him whom we have pierced, and mourn, and melt in the soul-dissolving vision, till the divine potter thought fit to mould and form us into another vessel, which shall contain the heavenly treasure, without bursting with pride, so as to break the bottle, and cause the wine to run out, and the bottle to perish. The bee, my sister, with wax on her wings, and honey in her bag, was thine own epistle. Perpetual heats and colds much impair my poor, frail tabernacle, and I feel it daily, especially in the winter season; and therefore

therefore I know it cannot stand long. The whole bulk of professors in general hate the power of godliness, and are taught to guard themselves against it, and all convictions from it; and I know that God will visit for these things. Our country hath long been the "valley of vision." But the sun is going down, and the shadows of the evening are stretching out; the light is much hated, and stumbling upon the dark mountains must be expected. But may we, "who are of the day, watch and be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation! For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory." Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the most high and eternal God, be ascribed, as is most justly due, all honour and glory, power and praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for ever and ever, amen and amen, says

Thine affectionate brother

In the best of all bonds,

and in the sweetest of all ties,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I HAVE been expecting to hear from you every post for some time. I therefore have taken the liberty of sending you this, "to stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance." I hope this will find you well in body and soul. I know it is always well with the body when the soul prospers; and nothing can make the soul prosper but the presence of the dear Redeemer, the friend of sinners, and a sense of his love known, felt, and enjoyed, in the heart, by the operation of the blessed Spirit. This makes a heaven upon earth. The Lord has blessed me with the enjoyment of this ever since I came from Gaffon's Bower, more or less. And truly he hath made my cup to run over. O what love to the poor prodigal, who had spent all his substance, and was brought to a famine, yea, brought to want a morsel of bread, and a drop of water, and could not feed upon husks! Never did I, till of late, feel such meltings of heart under a sense of this love manifested to my soul. Like Ezekiel, I have been brought through this river of pleasure four times.

times. The first time it was up to my ankles; the second time it came to my knees; the next time to my loins; and I believe I have been brought through it the fourth time this last week; and I found it to be a river without bottom or shore. And this water is come into my soul; and I am sure that I shall never sink here; for the Lord has given me the hands of faith, that I may spread them forth and swim. I feel all those wonderful operations that the prodigal felt when his father said to the servant, "Bring hither the best robe, and put it on him; put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet." Feel it I do; but it is past all description. Costly it was, and that the Redeemer knew when he gave his soul an offering for my sins, and shed his precious blood to satisfy divine justice in my behalf. O it melts me, and breaks my heart! O, my dear brother, help me to praise him! I cannot, I cannot praise him as I would. But I shall do it when this mortal shall have put on immortality. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with his likeness." I believe the Lord will not keep me long here. Well, I know that "neither height nor depth, life nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall ever separate me from his love." It rejoices my heart to see the Lord is carrying on his work on the hearts of many poor sinners under the orations of his Majesty's herald in this dark corner

of the globe. He is "a burning and a shining light." He stands in the rostrum as a flaming fire for God. Surely he is the greatest blessing that ever God bestowed on such worthless sinners as we are. Sister Moorhen's wounds get deeper and deeper; I believe she will, in the Lord's time, be brought to that strait where all human strength expires, and where there is none shut up or left. There is another poor soul also who is tumbling all to pieces. This is the best news I can send you. O that Zion's cords may be lengthened, and her stakes strengthened! Give my kind love to your travelling friends; and accept my thanks for your soul-strengthening letter. It was "as cold water to a thirsty soul, or good news from a far country; as apples of gold in pictures of silver." And I know that my God will reward you. He says that a cup of cold water given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose its reward. And those that water others shall be watered themselves. Was it not so, I think the favours he heaps on me would make me miserable. I am happy to find you are better. I hope it will not be long before I see you in the Dale. I hope you will favour me with a letter soon. In the mean time, let me have an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept humble, watchful, and near to the Lord. May the Lord bless you in body and soul, in your basket and store,

store, in your goings out and in your comings in,
is the prayer of

Your very sincere friend

and sister in Christ Jesus,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XIII.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

" Thus saith the Lord God, I will take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it on an high mountain and eminent. In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." Ezek. xvii. 22. From the royal house of David was this young twig cropped, and on mount Zion it is planted, where

the fulness of the ever-blessed Godhead, which dwells in Jesse's Branch, displays his omnipresence and omnipotence in the souls of thousands of poor sinners, and unites them (as boughs in the cedar) to himself; in which almighty power, love, and goodness, manifested and put forth in the heart of the sinner, the soul rests satisfied and contented, and finds and feels his shadow a sweet screen from Satan's fiery darts, and from the piercing sentences of a fiery law. In the shadowing branches of this goodly cedar shall the birds of paradise dwell. Sing care away, Philomela; for our beloved "giveth songs in the night." Sing of his right hand and stretched-out arm, which got himself the victory over thy heart, and over all thy foes. Sing of mercy and of judgment; of judgment past, and of mercy come. Sing of thy well beloved touching his vineyard, and of union with the living vine. Sing of his glorious triumph, of his dying love, and of his redeeming blood; and sing glory to the righteous. "Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody; for as well the fingers as the players on instruments shall be there; all my springs are in thee."

He that receives his testimony into his heart, namely, that we must be born again (John iii. 11), and that he that believes in him shall be saved (John iii. 32), and he that follows him shall have the light of life (John xxi. 24), is sealed; the
testimony

testimony is come home to his soul with power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; which assurance is the sealing, confirming, and establishing, the soul in the certainty and enjoyment of the testimony received; and of a part and lot in all the blessings and benefits promised and testified of. He sets his hand to the seal that God is true; he subscribes the evidence, and the book of the purchase. "One shall say, I am the Lord's," for he hath taken me as a prey from the mighty; "and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob," saying, I have got both the birthright and the blessing; "and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel," crying aloud, I have prevailed in prayer; I have looked at my beloved till I have overcome him; and I shall be more than conqueror (over heaven and earth) through him that hath loved me; "for as a prince have I power with God and with man, and have prevailed."

These are golden days, Philomela! Make the most of them now, while the evil days come not; now, while Wisdom leads thy soul through all her mystic gates, wards, and doors, and exhibits her glorious and visionary scenes before thee. "She stands on the top of high places," Prov. viii; on Calvary, on mount Zion, and on every little hill thereof; on the munition of rocks, and on all the ancient mountains, and on the everlasting

hills of electing love, and " by the way in the places of the paths." Here she stands, in all these watering places, breathing places, resting places, halting places, and fainting places, in order to give caution, encouragement, refreshment, seasonable counsel, strength, and comfort; by all which they go from strength to strength, " while passing through the valley of Baca." Heavenly showers fill the pools: " I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will make the wilderness pools of water, and the dry land springs of water."

" She crieth at the gates;" and the voice of her cry is, " The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter. This is the gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter."

" She crieth at the entry of the city," saying, " Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Wherefore thou art no more a stranger and a
foreigner,

foreigner, but a fellow-citizen of the saints and of the household of God. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh."

"She crieth at the coming in of the doors." Prov. viii. 3. The first doors she cries at are the doors of death's shadow: "Hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" Job xxxviii. 17. These doors are the *covering* and *veil* that is spread over all nations (Isa. xxv. 7), and the dismal gloom that the god of this world hath blinded our minds with, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into us, and we should be saved. But Wisdom cries at these doors, saying, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Isa. ix. 2. The light of the Lord penetrates through and opens these doors, and the understanding receives the light, and goes forth in it, and we begin (the doors being opened) "with open face to behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii. 18. But, though the understanding is gone forth, the soul is not wholly enlarged: "Light is given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul." Job iii. 20.

Then Wisdom leads us to another door, saying, "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope."

hope." Hosea ii. 14, 15. Now hope enters in, and expectation goes forth; and the cry of Wisdom at this door is, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, which spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh; but his leaf shall be green, he shall not be careful in the year of drought, nor shall he cease from yielding fruit." Thus Wisdom rends the veil, and opens the doors of death's shadow, and lets the understanding look out of obscurity, and out of darkness. Then she banishes black despair, and opens the door of hope, when hope enters the soul, and expectation of better times goes forth.

And next she leads us to another door, saying, "They rehearsed all that God had done by them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." Acts xiv. 27. The seat, or proper place, of faith is the heart: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," &c. Obdurate hardness and unbelief are the doors that keep the word and faith out of the heart, till a divine power attends the voice of Wisdom. But she cries at this door, and her powerful voice is, "As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me." Now faith goes into the heart by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; then our obdurate hardness gives way, the door of faith opens, and the right hand of the Lord makes the injurious bolt

bolt of cursed infidelity fly back. The opening of this door dissolves the soul: "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him." Song v. 4. But still we are not enlarged; for this is but the hole of the door. The bowels move for him, but he is not come in the promised and glorious manifestation of himself. Faith is come, as it was to the blind man healed; but the object of faith is not yet discovered: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

The next door that Wisdom opens is the door of "the strong hold of Satan." And her voice at this door is, I am sent "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." Isa. xlii. 7. "Son, daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee." And this is a full discharge. Guilt flies, the yoke of our transgression is broken, Satan vanishes, pardoning love flows in, and fear and torment are cast out; the chains of our sins are knocked off, the prison garments are laid aside, and the wedding garment is put on. He puts off our sackcloth, and girds us with gladness.

The next door is the door of mercy. This opens almost of its own accord, as soon as we escape the prison. By Jesus we have access with confidence

fidence into this grace wherein we stand. And the cry of Wisdom at this door is, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." John x. 7—9. Now this door, that admits us into the presence of God, and into communion and fellowship both with the Father and the Son, is God's lifting up the light of his countenance upon us, and giving us the light of the knowledge of the glory of himself in the face of Jesus Christ, and a full enjoyment of God's everlasting love through Christ, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. This is the door; for, if God hides his face, who can behold him? and, without being drawn by his love, who can come to him? And, if he leaves a man in his own guilt, and under the wrath of the law, by these things " he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." Job xii. 14. Hence it appears that a man must have the light of the Lord's countenance, attended with his love, before he can enter into the joy of the Lord.

The next door that Wisdom cries at is the door of the wedding-chamber: " And they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut." Matt. xxv. 10. Wisdom's cry at this door will be, " Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter

enter the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This door will be opened at the first resurrection, after the living saints are changed, and the dead in Christ raised; in which they will be safe, while the wicked are burnt up, and the world with them. And this will be Wisdom's last cry, "Thy dead men shall live; with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead."—"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. xxvi. 19—21.

Now will the Master be risen up, and have shut the door, after which all knocking and calling will meet with no regard, for there can be no admittance.

Thus, dearly beloved Philomela, have I endeavoured to shew thee something of the paths of Wisdom, together with her mystical gates and doors, as well as I could, and as far as I have been led through them; and through which all regenerate souls pass who "follow the Lamb in the regeneration." This "is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen:

seen : the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." Job xxviii. 7, 8. The lion of the bottomless pit never walked here, nor were any whelps of his ever found there. And to this agrees the prophet : " And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness ; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those : the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there ; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads." Isa. xxxv. 8—10. Numbers are searching to find this path, who never had so much as their face Zionward, but stumble upon the dark mountains in a way not cast up : " The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them ; because he knoweth not how to go to the city." Eccl. x. 15. This is the way that is " above to the wife, that he may depart from hell beneath ;" it is " the way of life ; and in the path thereof there is no death." The curse and wrath of God attend every other way but this. " There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Because they seek not union with the true vine, nor have they any regard to the branches in it, therefore " their portion is cursed in the earth : he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards."

vineyards." Job xxiv. 18. And now, what is this *highway* and a *way*? The *highway* is Christ and faith in him: "I am the way; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." This is the *highway*. And *the way*, which is to be called, "The way of holiness," is, following Christ in the regeneration; for such shall sit down with him on his throne.

Thus, Philomela, I have led thee in the way which, in a state of nature, I knew not, and in a path which, to all unregenerate men, is not known, nor can be, till God make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. Upon all other paths but this hypocrites as well as saints may walk. But no lion nor lion's whelps, no fierce lion nor ravenous beast, no unclean creature, no apostate, no heretic or hypocrite, have I ever met with or found upon this path: the way of regeneration is untrodden and unfrequented by all these. I could wish thee to make a few high heaps, and to set up a few land-marks, to be of use in future times. But nothing of this sort can be attended to at present; for at Wisdom's gates and doors not only her heavenly voice is heard and felt, but all manner of fruits, new and old, are laid up at these gates for his best beloved. Song vii. 13. Hence the pleasantness of the ways, the ravishing voice, and delicious fruit, take up all the attention; so that all advice upon this head is in vain. Therefore sing on, Philomela; for to
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add to the melody of thy heart, and to afford some fresh matter for the song, is the cause of my sending these "to the chief finger on my stringed instruments." Hab. iii. 18.

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XIV.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

YOUR having informed me that the bee came to your hive with wax on its legs, and honey in its bag, encouraged me to come again to you. Precious was your last to me! delicious fare! for really it has been so refreshing to my soul, that I can feed upon nothing else: therefore have compassion on me, and go on still to help me; and you will certainly experience the wise man's words to be true, viz. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." Consider that this week there is no going up to Bethel. Our watchman is removed into a corner, so that we can neither see him nor hear him. The Lord bless the interview, and grant that he may soon return, and

come to us in all the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ. I have read again and again your last letters, and found a second benefit. I believe, while I remain upon this earth, that I shall never have done with them. Some of the mysteries I had the key to before they came, or I never could have found out the riddle. Sweetly was my soul led into the experience and enjoyment of those blessed truths; which did so humble and meeken my soul, that it crucified me afresh to this sinful world; so that I am not fit to live in it. I seem quite insensible to every thing in it, and hardly at times know what I am about, or where I am. This has given me some light into those words of our blessed Saviour, in his prayer to the Father before he entered upon his sufferings. Praying for his disciples, he says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." I cannot but think that you have been lately a sabbath-day's journey into some part of the promised land, and have reached as far as the brooks of Eschol; for what you have sent to me seems to be some of the first ripe fruits, a most precious cluster. It could not be carried by one; but it hath been laid on a staff, and born betwixt two. It was one of the choicest of all blessings; no less than an earnest of the whole inheritance. O that I was but with you, to tell you what I enjoy now, while the King's herald is with you! But this is impossible. Wives
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and mothers must be keepers at home. But the heaven-born soul cannot be confined. Though absent in body, yet am I present in spirit; and, had I the wings of a dove, nothing under heaven should hinder my flight, for once, into the Desert.

I know now, by blessed experience, that nothing but a sense of the dying love of Jesus can humble a proud heart, and soften the stubborn spirit of a sinner, so as to bring him to the Lord's feet; and I am a living witness that this will do it. This will subdue the most hardened, rebellious, and desperate wretch that ever breathed on this earth; and this will be my wonder and admiration to all eternity. O that I was but above, that I might "praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God!" How do I long to join with the hundred and forty-four thousand in their song to him that hath loved us, and redeemed us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Surely my voice will be the loudest among them.

My soul thanks you for what I have received this week from you. I have had a *banquet indeed*. May a full reward be given you by your Father, and my Father, your God and my God! A sweet shelter indeed my soul has found from the windy storm and tempest. I find it as the shadow of a great rock in this weary land. My soul has still in remembrance the wornwood and the gall, which were bitter enough to my soul. But all is
past;

past; and nothing of vindictive wrath shall my soul know henceforth and for ever. What astonishing love was it for the Lord to pass by such a rebel as I was, and to say unto me, when I was in my blood, "Live." Yea, he has spread his skirt over me; and in that blessed robe shall I appear before him in the great day, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and, though black as the tents of Kedar, fair as the curtains of Solomon. As you observe, could we always live on the mount, without any interruption; but, alas! down from the mount we must come. But I am, like Peter, for detaining the Lord, and building a tabernacle, that I may abide with him till he shall take me to the upper and better house.

What the Lord is preparing me for, I know not; and what my path will be next, I am in the dark about. You intimate that he is preparing me for the field of action. May I be taught to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ! The world, the flesh, and the devil, are against me, I know; but this I know likewise, that I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. However, at present I seem as if I had no enemies; for the Lord has made the corruptions of my heart, and Satan too, as still as a stone. And sweetly does he commune with my soul, which humbles me in the dust before him; and I feel such meltings of heart as I never knew any thing of before; which have been much produced by

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your

your two last letters. The mystic gates and wards that Wisdom is leading my soul through are some of the secrets that are with them in whose heart he has put his fear. "I," says Wisdom, "lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, to cause them that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures." I believe that what I am now in the enjoyment of is some of that substance, that sabbath-day's portion, which you told me in my dream I should enjoy. Surely the Lord does now, as well as in days of old, instruct by dreams and visions of the night. "When deep sleep falleth upon men, then he sealeth their instructions." I am sure I can witness to the truth of this. We were greatly in expectation of seeing you before now. But the Lord knows best when to send you. I hope, when you do come, it will be with good news from a far country, and make it one of the days of the Son of Man to us. I think I need not tell you that I shall be happy to hear from you again. I have a young *hidden one* with me who desires to be remembered to you. She wishes you the enjoyment of every spiritual blessing. She is one that is waiting at the pool for the moving of the waters, to be healed of all her spiritual diseases. Our little sister, who hath no breasts, is much indisposed. I think she would greatly esteem a letter from you. Remember my love to Father G——n. I hope he is not offended at the liberty I took in writing
to

to him. I must conclude, wishing you every blessing of the better covenant, and that you may ever have much of the presence of the Lord with you.
So prays

Yours, in sincere affection,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XV.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

My dear sister's epistle is arrived, with all its good tidings, and the reflections of good news from a far country. The night is not only far spent, but gone, with thee; and nothing but the day-spring from on high visits thee. The wilderness springs, and the desert blossoms as the rose. Nothing now but honey from the comb, wine from the cluster, and milk from the breast. The old man is crucified with Christ, yea, dead, buried, and the body of sins destroyed; and there is an end of him. Satan, who had the power of death, is destroyed also, for Christ hath tri-

umphed over him upon the cross; so that no evil is expected from that quarter. Self-denial, a daily cross, the furnace of affliction, and the fiery trial of faith, are all out of sight, and out of mind, and neither desired nor expected.

You inform me that you should like to continue in that mount. But I must confess it is a mystery to me that thou art not down from it before now. Faith must be tried with fire before it shall be found unto praise, and glory, and honour, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Can you glory in your infirmities? Can you take pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake? To be sure the most useful soldiers in an army must be the young recruits, who are engaged in spending their bounty; and the most useful children in a family must be those who are hanging at the breast. Such soldiers serve to fill the muster-roll; and such children serve to increase the number of a family; and that is all the use they are of. God hath set the day of prosperity and the day of adversity one against the other. But your evil days come not. The reason of my long silence is your long prosperity. I may be a fellow-helper of your joy; but to comfort them that mourn is a greater act of charity. It is not my peculiar province to tune the love-strings of an heart that is always filled with melody. Besides, you have very few, in that part of the world, to sing to but those of heavy hearts;
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and much music to these may provoke them to jealousy, and they may envy your happiness, and be led, by the devil and unbelief, to curse their hard fate, unless you can mingle a little wisdom with it; that is, conceal it, when need requires, and become weak to the weak, and as bound to them that are under the law.

I once knew a young man who continued in his comforts for three or four years, and who seemed to have nothing else but joy and happiness; and at that time I had seldom any thing else but temptations, bondage, persecution, hunger, cold, and nakedness; and I have often envied his happiness, longed to be indulged like him, and cursed my hard fate and evil days. But he turned out an awful apostate, and, when he had filled his measure, came to his end in the midst of his days. I am watching to see what sort of a suckling thou wilt turn out to be; whether one of them who always need milk, being unskilful in the word of righteousness; or one of full age, who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil, and so live upon strong meat. When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, with all his saving benefits, when pardon, justification, and adoption, all came in at once, and perfect liberty was proclaimed, I looked at him whom I had pierced, and mourned; not for him, for I had got him; but over him, to think of his dreadful sufferings for such a worthless wretch as me.

His dying love melted me ; his comforts filled my soul with holy grief ; I rejoiced in his salvation, but wept all the day long over my suffering Saviour. My unworthiness made me coyly put away his tender mercy from me, and I cringed from him to shun the light. But he pressed his love upon me, and pursued me, and compelled me to use freedom and familiarity with him. This glorious vision, and the blessed effects of it, continued ; excepting a few intervals, for near twelve months ; and every evil of my heart was entirely hid from me ; at which time the promises came into my soul swarming like bees ; and, as they came into my heart, so they discharged their rich and blessed contents, and that with power, love, and comfort ; when at the same time the Spirit explained their meaning to my understanding, and applied their blessings to my heart ; and I sucked the breasts of these consolations ; I milked out, and was satisfied and delighted with the abundance of Zion's glory. I was dandled on the knee, and borne upon the side ; and, as one whom his mother comforteth, so did my God and Saviour comfort me ; and I was comforted in Jerusalem ; for I had an open vision of that mystical city for some hours together, and that in the day-time. This open vision enlarged my mind, and extended my views, and my inward consolations abounded ; insomuch that my soul melted with love, gratitude, meekness, humiliation, contrition,

trition, and godly sorrow, all the day long. I loathed myself in dust and ashes, and thought I could never be enough avenged on myself for my former folly, nor ever appear little enough in my own eyes, nor be enough grateful to the King of kings and Lord of lords. This continued, as before observed, well nigh a whole year, without much variation; and in these frames I was wonderfully secure, and expected daily to be ripening for glory, and that I should soon be called to the upper world; and I longed for it. Little did I think that these comforts would ever be exchanged for spiritual desertions, the piercing frowns and flights of Heaven, and the dreadful assaults of Satan. I had, in my unspeakable joy, defied both the devil and sin. The sucking child had played on the hole of the asp; but it is the weaned child that shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. I had, in my prosperity, said, "Surely I shall never be moved; for thou, Lord, of thy goodness, hast made my hill so strong." After the expiration of the above term I found the corruptions of my heart begin to stir, and appear in sight. John could not be more terrified at the appearance of the beast with seven heads and ten horns than I was at the appearance of these. I cried mightily to God, and down they all went, and out of sight. Soon after they appeared again; and I prayed, and all these little foxes, that spoiled the vines, sculked into their holes. But soon they appeared

more formidable, first one and then another ; and, before I could get one out of fight by prayer, there would appear ten more in fight, till I quite despaired of driving out these old inhabitants of the land. And now my comforts fled, and the Lord left me ; and Satan came to present to my view the holiness of a real saint, and how widely I differed from one of that happy number, by suggesting such texts as these : “ He that is born of God sinneth not ; ” “ They do no iniquity ; they walk in his law,” &c. And with this temptation also was I beset, namely, that I had inadvertently sinned against the Holy Ghost. This cut my girdle. I cast away all my confidence, repented of my presumption in claiming Christ as mine, and relinquished, as far as unbelief could go, all pretensions to any part or lot in the great salvation of Christ. At this time the Lord returned with double love and treble glory, and revived the whole work, and brought it all forth to light again, and led me to compare spiritual things with spiritual. His work within, with his word of promise without, and what I read in his book, I found to be engraved on my heart, and I appeared to be established like the everlasting hills.

And now I must tell my friend how this trial came upon me. I had been for some time turning over in my mind such passages as these ; “ You shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.” “ Is it through much tribulation we must enter

enter into the kingdom of God." "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." "He that will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." I knew that I had none of these exercises, and therefore concluded all was not right with me; that I was not "in the footsteps of the flock;" and, fearing of coming short of the promised rest, and of any thing being lacking in my faith that is essential to salvation, I secretly wished for trials and troubles, and for such tribulation as lay in the way to the kingdom; and soon after the above-described desertion came on. But, after the above-mentioned revival of the work, my mountain seemed so strong again, that I thought, as before, that I should never be moved again. But, soon after, another spiritual desertion came on, attended with wrath, bitterness of soul, legal bondage, and intolerable hardness of heart. And with this a very strange fire was kindled, which I never had felt before, and that was spiritual jealousy; and this stirred up the most bitter rebellion, and laid me open to the cruel assaults of Satan. All these came on at once. This sad complication of miseries so confounded me, and drank up my spirits, that I was obliged to quit my lawful labour, and to wander into the fields and woods. At length the Lord came again, as before, and brought his whole work on my soul to light again; and I cursed my folly in giving way to Satan and to unbelief, and for calling in question
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the faithfulness and truth of the unchangeable Jehovah; and secretly wished for another onset with the devil, not doubting but I should quit myself like a man. But, as soon as the next attack came on, I turned back in the day of battle, although harneſſed and carrying a bow; for the devil, varying his temptations, ſurprized me on that ſide where I was moſt ſecure. And hence it appeared as though ſome ſtrange thing had happened unto me. For ſome months I went on, up and down in the balance of the ſanctuary, this way. And I learnt one leſſon in this field of action, and that was, that the Lord's ſtrength was made perfect in weakneſs. For, when I reſolved and muſtered up all my courage, I never ſtood at all, but fell when the firſt dart reached me; but, when I feared, trembled, and cried mightily to my God and Saviour, he hath ſtrengthened the weak againſt the ſtrong, ſo that the weak hath come even to the ſtreſs. I have, at ſuch times, been enabled even to reſemble a ſoldier of Chriſt. I have rebuked the devil for his insolence and blaſphemy; I have curſed him and deſied him, in the name of the living God. I told him he was damned, and his puniſhment would certainly come on him, and that my eyes ſhould ſee it; and he could not deny it, nor reply againſt it. However, theſe continual changes, one day at the gates of heaven, and the next day in the belly of hell, led me to conclude that it was not pleaſing to
 God

God that I was so insatiable after comfort; because I perceived that my joys got more and more short-lived, and my bitter seasons were more and more lengthened out. The day of prosperity appeared but an hour, and the day of adversity a month. My heart was well acquainted with its own bitterness; nor did strangers intermeddle with my joy. Yet I secretly wished that my feet stood in a more even path. But must I tell you all the secret? must I disclose my own shame? Take it then. I thought in my heart, and muttered out with my lips, the following perverseness: "I believe the Lord grudges me my comforts, or else he would never suffer me to be so buffeted by the devil every time they are gone; and I would sooner be without them than go on so." And the Lord took me at my word; for the sweet breast of consolation was immediately withdrawn, to my great grief, and no small mortification; and I found it just as the evangelical prophet represents it: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." Isa. xxviii. 9, 10. The breast being withdrawn, I searched the scriptures day and night to see what security I could get, what confirmation and establishment the word of God afforded. I compared
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his work on my soul with his word, and especially those parts where he promises to make a new covenant with us, to pardon sin, and give us a new heart, &c. ; and I found the work to be genuine, and that it would stand the test of every text, except such as these : “ He that is born of God sinneth not.” “ They also do no iniquity : they walk in his ways.” Psalm cxix. 3. These I could not make out, as they seemed to assert nothing less than perfection. At these I often staggered ; and they were sad stumbling-blocks to me. However, I considered the decrees and purposes of God, his covenants, promises, faithfulness, and truth ; the immutability of his nature, the finished work of Christ, the oaths of God, the Spirit’s work, and his faithfulness to his children in every age ; and got much light, and gathered much strength, this way ; and the blessed Spirit, who before was my comforter, was now a spirit of revelation and understanding to me ; and, having lost all my milk and honey, I fed upon strong meat ; the breast was taken away, and knowledge and understanding became my food. I had before grown in grace, and now I grew in knowledge ; and my mind was much employed in heavenly meditation on the glorious truths of the gospel. But this did not afford that nourishment, warmth, and heavenly sweetness, to the heart, which the other did. I often sat down and considered the days of old, when “ the visitations of
God

God preserved my spirit, when his glory was fresh in me, and when the dew lay all night upon my branch;" and wept, sighed, whined, and sobbed, after the milk and honey. But the Holy Spirit, at such times, would produce submission and resignation in me to the will of God, and suggest to my mind that, when I had finished my course, I should have my heart full of that sweet fare, and that for evermore; which made me long for death. At these times " I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul was even as a weaned child." Psalm cxxxi. 2. About that period I was working in the coal barge, and suffering hunger, cold, and almost nakedness; besides the conflicts within, persecutions without, and the loss of that which to me was dearer than life. It pleased God to pity and visit me again. I had an old lumber-room, where I often withdrew when my burden was too heavy for me to bear; and as sure as I entered that place, so sure did the Lord of all lords visit me. He would " come down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth;" till I could compare it to nothing but what I had read of entering into the holy of holies, when " the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." O what condescension for the Most High to humble himself to take notice of such worms of the dust!

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After many of these foul-reviving and foul-establishing visits, those trials, which are peculiar to the ministry, came on, attended with legal bondage, and various temptations and oppositions; and beset I was with every class of heretics, till I went, like the woman the Saviour healed, bowed together for several years; till, what with trouble, real want, and hard labour, I was at the brink of the grave, and longed for it; but it came not. At length it pleased God to renew my youth like the eagle's; and he supplied me with temporal necessities, equipped me with truth and fortitude, and gave me a great desire to be useful; and he soon let me see that I did not labour in vain. And now this became my food; it was my meat and drink to do his will, and to see his work prosper. And this led me to walk steady with my God in peace and equity; and, having obtained help from him, I continue to this day. Thus, Delilah like, your three succeeding epistles have drawn the secret out of my heart. And, after all, what is it? Why, divine power lodged in a lock of human hair; or, to speak in New Testament language, it is God's strength made perfect in man's weakness. Adieu. I must attend the household; but cannot help subscribing myself

Ever yours,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I RECEIVED safe your very valuable epistle; and I hope you will excuse my not acknowledging the receipt of it before this time. I assure you it has not been for want of inclination, but want of time. My hands have been fully employed in nursing; which hath been to me a sore trial. The Lord has visited my dear little boy with a disorder which we feared would prove fatal. And under this trial the Canaanites, which are left in the land to be as thorns in my side, made me severely feel their power, assisted by Satan their ally, who appeared at their head, and who made such an inroad upon me as greatly disquieted my spirits. The rebellion of my heart was stirred up, and hard thoughts of God followed; I could not give up the child; and Satan suggested such things to my mind concerning the eternal state of the boy, should he die under the curse of God's righteous law, as I believe I never shall let come out of the doors of my lips. But I assure you they were such as rent the caul of my heart; and, though I could not give the child
 4 up,

up, yet I trembled at the thoughts of asking for his life. I was pressed beyond measure. I could only say to the Lord, "Thou knowest my heart, what I am by nature; and that nothing but these rank weeds will ever be produced by me, unless thou art pleased, by the operations of thy Spirit, to work in me that submission and resignation to thy will which shall glorify thee." The Lord appeared for the child, and hath restored him to us again. But submission and resignation were not found in my heart. His Excellency sent me your epistle, which you directed to be left with him, with the following direction on it: "To her Majesty the Queen of the Beggars, value a thousand pounds." But, when I had read the contents, I was constrained to enhance the value; for I found the price of it to be far above rubies. I thank you kindly for it. I thought of an old proverb, viz. "To be fore-warned is to be fore-armed."

I think there can but little befall me in the path of tribulation but what you have shewed me already. You seem to intimate that you think I may be a stumbling-block to those whose joys do not rise so high as God is pleased to raise mine. Indeed, it is true that some envy me, and some are filled with jealousy. But envy and jealousy seem to me to be two different things. Where the latter is working, I believe it will be a means, under God, of bringing the same blessings into their

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souls.

souls. These will not rejoice when I am brought low, but will be the first that will help me, by their prayers, that I may be raised up again. But where envy works, nothing would gratify these more than to see me down. But this is like to bring nothing into their own souls. To the former I feel my whole heart and soul going out; but to the latter I cannot find a union.

Something in your letter quite surprised me, and that is, to think that, after you had been led in such a sweet path for ten months, and under such manifestations of divine love, you should again be brought into such darkness as to doubt of the work on your soul being real. Had you not related it as experienced by yourself, I should have staggered at it. But, if God has dealt so with you, I fear I shall not escape. But it is such an evil day as I would wish to put far from me. Should such a time ever come, I think I shall find your epistle to be of great use to me. But I should never have thought there was a probability of any thing like it befalling me. To be sure at present my mountain seems to stand strong; the place of my defence is the Munition of Rocks; and God is truly gracious to me; for I have not had one day of real darkness in my own soul since the time we all met at Gasson's Bower, where the Lord met me by the way, as he did the disciples in their journey to Emmaus. I saw his Excellency yesterday. We are reaping the fruits of his

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labour.

labour. He came to us (after his long absence, as I called it) in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace. I am glad to hear we are to have another printed sermon from you next week. I found your last much blessed to me. I shall be glad to hear that you are coming among us again; and I hope you will favour me with another epistle soon; for I feel myself disappointed if I do not hear from you once a week. I should be glad to know, in your next, if I am at liberty to shew your last epistle to our friends: they know I have had one. I believe his Excellency has told them. But I have given them to understand that they shall not see it without your leave. The young stripling from the Bower declared yesterday that he would not let me be at peace till he had seen it. I was glad to hear, by my sister's letter, that you had not been afflicted so badly with cold and hoarseness this winter as you have been some winters past. May the Lord continue you in bodily health and much soul prosperity, is the fervent prayer of

Your affectionate sister in the

bonds of the gospel,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XVII.

To PHILOMELA, of the King's Dale.

THE epistle of my sister is come safe, and now lies before me. It is, according to the prophet Habakkuk, a song of various things, sung in various tunes. Your days have been sorrow, and your travail grief. Call this time of adversity Gad, for there is a troop behind; or call them the beginning of sorrows, for unbelief will often tell you that there will be no end of them. Satan is a skilful adversary. He can alter both his appearance and his influence. While I lay in the dark regions of the shadow of death, under the assests of divine justice, and filled with fury and the rebukes of my God, he worked constantly upon the hardness of my heart, the carnal enmity of my mind, and on that soul-destroying sin of unbelief, in which I was shut up. He took occasion to multiply his accusations by the sins which stood before mine eyes, the burden of guilt which I felt, and the wrath of the law which worked in me. And I knew that this was the devil, and the works of him. But, after my deliverance had been proclaimed, my calling made clear, and mine election sure, he came to me again,

so altered in appearance, in language, and in influence, that I really did not know my old acquaintance. He came not now in his sable garb, but in his shining robe; not to attend my funeral to hell and the grave, but as a friend at my wedding; not to accuse, but to give me counsel; not to drive, but to draw; not to sink me into despair, but to lift me up to the wind, and make me ride upon it; not to reproach me, but to praise me; not to tell me what an awful rebel I had been, but what a saint I then was. Satan had changed his voice. And surely among them that are born of women there had not appeared a greater wonder than Parson Sack. I, not in the least suspecting this strange visitor to be one of the king of Babylon's ambassadors, was pleased with his coming as much as Hezekiah was, and shewed him all my precious things; for he came not with heavy tidings, but with smooth things; not as a destroyer, but as a builder up. He treated of the goodness and safety of my state; of the height of divine favour in which I stood, and of my certain arrival at the desired haven. From this he descended to the small number of God's elect; very small, when compared to the world at large. And as he preached, so he endeavoured to apply the doctrine. He worked his bottle-screw into my natural affections, and made my bowels sound. He set before me all my little ones, and my dame, as not included in the bond of the covenant; and then operated upon
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and influenced every tender feeling I had. My compassion, earnest desires, &c. &c. began to rise up and flow out at such a rate, just as Milton describes the lust of Adam and Eve working in them, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, till they conceived it was now divinity springing up within them. And so I thought that my heart was filled with grace. Having worked me up to the highest pitch of natural affection for my wife and children, he then left the old hen and chicken, and led my mind abroad to my friends and relations; then to my old acquaintance; next to many tender-hearted, pitiful, and well-meaning people which I knew in the world. And still my heart enlarged, and, as he presented them to view, so I took them in. Then he came to the nations at large. Still my heart opened and extended as he brought them to bear upon my mind. Then the poor heathens were presented to my view, until my bowels sounded like an harp, not only for Moab, but for all these. And then the irrevocable decrees of God were set before me, just as they are set forth by the Arminians. And next the devils were presented to me as objects of my pity. And this last chamber of imagery discovered the cheat. Satan could no longer be hid; and I remembered his former fiery darts, and soon was delivered from this snare of the fowler. However, this was of use to me in the ministry; for from that time I knew most assuredly who it

was that instructed, furnished, equipped, and sent out, the whole herd of Arminian teachers; for sure I am that it is the devil transformed that supplies them all.

Some time after this he paid me another visit, similar to the last. At that time I was in the ministry. He came now as a parson-maker, to instruct me how to proceed in the important work; and that was, to draw no lines between saints and sinners; to make no applications; to enforce no marks, evidences, love-tokens, nor sure tokens; to insist upon no criterions, characteristics, infallible proofs, signs, nor touchstones; and then I should give no offence, nor should I raise any bars of prejudice against me, nor have any stigma fixed upon my character; my usefulness would be extensive, and my reputation a sweet savour to all. I should endeavour to cast my net so as to take in all that come within the walls of my meeting, and endeavour to win all to love me; and those who love a believer are, "passed from death to life." This plan I intended to adopt. But, when I was in the work, the fire of zeal, of love, fervour, holy fear, boldness, and fortitude, flowed into me; so that, instead of saying, "A confederacy," I became a divider and scatterer wherever I went. The hypocrite hissed, and the honest soul felt the energy; and soon God led me to see this stratagem of the devil; and I learnt this lesson by it, that of all the workmen of God, and of all the works of God

under heaven, except the death of Christ, a minister of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost's work on the souls of men, are the greatest enemies to Satan. He has no objection to external reformation, if there be no internal regeneration. It is the Holy Spirit that casts out the strong man armed, takes away his armour wherein he trusted, spoils his house, and takes the prey from the mighty. Having escaped this snare, through the good hand of my God upon me, he paid me one more visit in his counterfeit rays; at which time he set before me all the real and imaginary evils and dangers that would attend me in the perilous work of the ministry; the oppositions from the world, from heretics and hypocrites; the hunger, cold, and nakedness, that I was exposed to; the treachery of pretended friends; the difficult work of getting to be clear in the greatest mysteries of religion, and of escaping all errors; the danger of my life by the way, and of death at the end, in a hundred forms; together with the uncertainty of the Lord's presence, aid, and support, which he argued from the sad desertions which had lately befallen me. He then shewed me my own safety, the goodness of my state, and the happiness which would occur if I withdrew to some lonely place, and kept all the dealings of God with me locked up in my own breast. But, this not succeeding, he soon made good his predictions; for there was not a tool, falsely called a gospel minister, in town

or country, but what was barking, biting, warning or cautioning people against me. And this has continued, without intermission, for twenty-four years and upwards; and I should think it an ill omen should it cease, which I am in no fear or danger of, seeing the devil has stocked the nation with so many novices, whom he puffs up with pride till they fall under the same sentence that fell upon him.

The bowels of compassion and the inordinate affection that you felt for the child, and the rebellion against God that attended it, you may safely conclude were the effects of a visit from this transformed devil. For God is as well able to regenerate a child as a man; and can perform that good work in the last moment now, as well as in the thief upon the cross. "His hand is not shortened." Besides, you have no scripture to prohibit or forbid your praying for your child, nor yet for the life of the child, supposing you conclude with "Not my will, but thine be done." And, if we cannot say this from the heart, then we can pray for submission that we may do it. David fasted, cried, and prayed, all day and night long for his child, though God, by his prophet, had declared it should die. He prayed even against the revealed will of God. But your prayer would have been according to his will. This is plain, because the child is restored to you again, even without being prayed for.

Your

Your nice distinction between *jealousy* and *envy* I must leave to the learned. I believe that Rachel was provoked to jealousy at the fruitfulness of Leah, and thought that she stood higher in the divine favour than herself; and the consequence was, that she envied her sister. The apostles were provoked to jealousy when James and John craved their seats on the right and left hand of Christ in his kingdom; and the other ten were filled with indignation against the two brethren. But, you may reply, Wisdom says, "Who can stand before envy?" True. And in another breath she tells you what stirs it up: "Jealousy is the rage of a man; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance." Solomon had learnt this by experience. God sent his prophet to Jeroboam to tell him that he should be king over ten tribes. This was a scourge to Solomon for his idolatry: and this provoked Solomon to such rage and jealousy that he sought to kill Jeroboam. The latter could not stand before the envy of the former, and therefore, to save his life, he fled into Egypt.

If thou wilt nurse, suckle, swaddle, prate, and preach, go on: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou canst not tell which shall prosper, either this or that," either the envious or the jealous; "or whether they shall both be alike good." But thou wilt be a better judge of this than thou now art when thy preaching season is over; for "there is
a time

a time to keep silence, as well as a time to speak." Thou wast not very fit for the pulpit in this thy last high fit of the fever; but that was nothing, either in weight or duration, to that which is yet to come. Walking with the footmen wearied Jeremiah; but afterwards he was called to contend with horses: and, when he was tired out in a land of peace, he was ordered to cope with the swellings of Jordan. God will have us at his feet; and it is not a little crossing and trying that will bring us there, and keep us there. To be stripped of all comfort, and to be laid in irons for a whole year, and this attended with intolerable hardness of heart; to be left free among the dead, and be given up to the influence of a sleepy devil, who shall give you a dose of his opium under every prayer that is put up, and under every sermon that is preached; this, this will be worse than all the afflictions that have befallen little Isaac. So I conclude, and so you shall confess. Call it one more secret from the locks of Samson.

In the Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XVIII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, of the Desert.

THE language of my heart at this time is, Was ever one favoured with such a friend, counsellor, and guide, in this world before? There may be; but this I can be certain of, that there never was one so unworthy of it. Every epistle I receive from you knits and unites my heart more and more to you. O what a sweet bond is this which knits every member of Christ to each other, and to their head! Your last favour has unmasked Satan to my view in such a manner as must enrage him greatly. Little did I think that the inordinate affections, and the sounding of the bowels, came from him. I have felt something of it before, and do to this moment. O, my dear friend, pray for me, that I may have wisdom given me from above that I may not be ignorant of his devices! Never did I see him in so formidable a view before. Surely he desires to have me, that he may sift me as wheat; and, if the prayer of the great High Priest does not prevail on my behalf, I must fall by his temptations. Your epistle brought to remembrance many visits
paid

paid to me in his white robes during these six months past. O what praise is due to God for keeping me from falling by this snare of the fowler! I have had many of the lectures on election which you mention, and the doctrine applied, and his ends answered, in my last trial. Rebellion enough I felt. Safely he might withdraw for a season; he was sure he left me miserable enough. You have, indeed, prophesied of a dark path I have to travel, which has wrought some discouragement in my heart. I am sure you will be a true prophet in all your predictions, and not one word of all you have spoken shall fall to the ground. Satan seems to me to be the most dangerous when he comes to bloat up the soul with pride. And I have found him approach in this way when I have been much in the enjoyment of divine love, as Mr. Hart says,

The heart uplifts with God's own gift,
And makes even *grace* a *snare*.

I felt so much of this about seven months ago as made me abhor myself. This was a little before my journey to the Bower, when God met me by the way. Our dear pastor made an observation in the pulpit, about a week before I received your last favour, which struck me very forcibly. It was this: that pride goeth before the destruction of a sinner, and a haughty spirit before the fall of a saint; and

and observed, that it was the devil's aim to get us on this ground, and then he was sure to procure our fall. And your mentioning in yours the ways and means he makes use of to effect this, and that from your experience, was very seasonable to me ; and I found that " a word fitly spoken is as apples of gold in pictures of silver ;" for the Lord makes me to fear this more than any thing. I am sensible there can be no safety but at the feet of Jesus. But true it is, as you observe, it is not a little crossing and trying that will keep me there. I find I am wrong in my views of envy and jealousy. Pardon me, dear Sir ; I have, perhaps, spoken for want of light. But you are looking forward to a time when, you say, I shall be a better judge of it, even when my preaching time is over. Indeed, Sir, I aspire to no such things as preaching. As you say, prate I do, and that when I should keep silence, which is known by the effects, by its bringing on me hatred and envy instead of love. I am often brought into snares by my tongue, which is an unruly member ; and I have smarted both for my speaking and my keeping silence. But, if I am to be left free among the dead, laid in irons a whole year, and be given up to the sleepy devil, I believe my mouth will be shut with a witness. If any thing less than this would do it, I should be thankful.

However, I hope ever to have an interest in your prayers, and to be favoured with your correspondence,

respondence, which I feel are among my greatest privileges. Shall hope to hear from you very soon, and believe me to remain

Your very sincere and affectionate friend

in the bonds of the gospel,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XIX.

To PHILOMELA, of the King's Dale.

I HAVE long been to thee as a dumb man, in whose mouth are no reproofs, having been much engaged. But you know "there is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;" and "there is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing." You have been, upon your returning to your heavenly Father, embraced, enrobed, entertained, and adorned, and long indulged with the soul-reviving melody of "let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And this

this music and dancing hath long continued with thee, during which time I could only be a fellow-helper of your joy, or a furtherer of your joy of faith. But now, perhaps, "the elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music, the joy of our heart is ceased, our dance is turned into mourning." But, when the truth is received in the love of it; when the testimony is bound up in the heart by the bond of the everlasting covenant, which is God's eternal love in Christ Jesus accompanying the word of grace; then we are constrained, however coyly we might put it away before, we are constrained, I say, to embrace it. being attended with the comforting seal of assurance; for it comes "in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;" which seal ratifies, confirms, and makes the promise sure to all the seed. And then what remains? Why, the hand of faith is stretched out to subscribe the evidences, both that which is open, and that which is sealed; namely, the whole word of God, which appears open to us, and is yet to be fulfilled, and that which is sealed on our hearts, as being fulfilled already. And this setting to the seal is to be attended with the confession of the mouth unto salvation, without either an *if* or a *but* in it: "One shall say, I am the Lord's; another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." Every one that
sends

sends a letter to another, giving an account of his deliverance, and of the assurance of his faith in Christ Jesus, subscribe with his hand to the honour and glory of God, as being faithful to his word, and rich in mercy. And he does no less who, believing in his heart, makes confession with his mouth unto salvation. While these things are carrying on in the soul, the good old wine flies about, and the glorious days of the Son of Man afford nothing but new love tokens, fresh or new discoveries; but, if they last never so long, and we "rejoice in them all," yet we must "remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many." How passive, resigned, composed, and tranquil, is the clay in the hand of the potter while the lump is formed into another vessel, in order to shew forth his praise! But O the evil days that have rolled over my head since! For many years did I keep looking back to the munitions of rocks, and to the views that I then had of the King in his beauty, and of the land that is very far off. But the bare and barren remembrance of them at last only made me lament my loss, and sometimes aggravated my misery; for, though I earnestly begged to have these restored, and to be upheld by his free Spirit, yet he appeared in this matter inflexible, as if it must not be so done in our country. But the following things abode with me; that is, a full persuasion that the work was genuine; a good hope of the great reward promised;

my mind completely rescued from the dark and dismal regions; nor did unappeased wrath and unatoned guilt ever enter my conscience, or sink my soul in the horrible pit afterward; though legal bondage and fatherly anger have often fell to my lot. But a good hope through grace counterpoises these, and keeps the soul at a par, or hanging at least in an even balance. The new birth, my sister, is to us the testimony of Jesus. "How can these things be?" saith Nicodemus. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness." Where this change is made, wherever perfect love casts out fear and torment, there is the testimony of Jesus; and "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. xix. 10. Yea, an earnest of the future inheritance, the first fruits of the glorious harvest, or of the harvest of glory; and faith itself "is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen;" and is attended with a train of forerunners which lead to perfect day. These things abide with us. But, alas! bonds and afflictions abide also; and these make such a medley of bitter-sweets, which are strange things to us. Now I shall expect to hear how you go on, and to have an honest account, whether any of my former predictions came to pass or not; or whether the oil of joy continues springing without any abatement; whether the banqueting-house affords the same profusion;

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whether the banner displayed is still in view ; and whether the same hearty welcome of " Eat, O friends ! drink ; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved ! " sounds still in thine ears, and attended with the same inward fulness and satisfaction as usual. In hope of a solution, I conclude, in the bonds of the better covenant,

Thine in Him,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XX.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I RECEIVED safe your kind favour, and kindly do I thank you for the same ; and glad I am to find you bear me on your mind. In compliance to your request, I take this opportunity of informing you of my spiritual welfare. I have not to inform you that I am in the banqueting-house : no ; those sweet seasons are over ; for my Beloved has withdrawn himself, and is gone, and
has

has left me a filly dove without an heart, as you warned me of in a former letter ; and I am going mourning without the sun. He has hid himself with a cloud in his anger, and my soul is melted because of trouble. He has taken the bag of money with him, and there seems to be a famine in the land, and I am in want. As you observe, the bare remembrance of those past seasons wherein I lived under his shadow, is only an aggravation of my misery. I well know now, and that by bitter experience, the truth of your former predictions, much of them having been fulfilled during these two months past ; and none but God himself could have supported me in the perilous path I am called to walk in. I have been brought so low as almost to cast away my confidence ; though, in my joys, I have said, numbers of times, I was sure I should never be shaken with respect to my state. But this language is purged from me by very sharp strokes. Indeed, I have sometimes a little light given me, from the word, that the path I am brought into is the path of tribulation that leads to the kingdom ; and a little light God has given me lately by a very particular dream. God still instructs me by dreams and visions of the night. Some part of it is now fulfilling, and some part remains to be fulfilled ; and much does God lead me to watch his hand, which is with me at this time. It would carry me far beyond the limits of a letter to give you a particular account of God's

dealing with me; and perhaps it is God's will that I should keep his dealings with me to myself. I am sure I have wished a thousand times lately I had never opened my mouth to any one about the work of God with me. I know it has involved me in many snares. However, nothing teaches like experience. I have been a little strengthened by those words in Job xxvi. 2, 3, wherein he says of God, "How hast thou helped him that is without power? How savest thou the arm that hath no strength? How hast thou counselled him that hath no wisdom? and how hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?" I am brought most sensibly to feel my want of help, power, strength, and wisdom; and I never so saw before my need of Christ in his office as a *counsellor*; and it strengthened me a little that he is styled by the prophet the Wonderful Counsellor. I think never did a poor soul stand more in need of his help, in all his offices and characters, than I do at this present time. Those lines of Mr. Hart's are truly applicable to me:

Weaker than the bruised reed,
Help I every moment need.

I hope still to be favoured with an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept, guided, and directed in all spiritual wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and preserved unto his heavenly kingdom;

kingdom ; and may the best of spiritual blessings continually be vouchsafed to you, is the prayer of

Your truly affectionate sister

in the bonds of the gospel,

The King's Dale..

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XXI.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

I AM still kept looking out at my study window, with my heart not a little set on my intended journey to the King's dale. But my weak state of body, and the long, miserable, wet season, not a little discourages me. I long to see and know how you all go on. I am just like an old hen, which hath got more chickens than she can cover with her feathers ; for my thoughts are all over the nation, and I am always afraid of the hawks and kites. But this is indulging fear where no fear is ; for under his feathers his children shall trust ; his truth shall be their shield and

buckler. I want to see the King's herald ; for, if I do not see nor hear from him every four or five days, all is not right. O, when shall that happy time arrive, and that blessed mansion be inhabited, where " the inhabitant shall no more say, I am sick !" where those dismal changes from cold to hot, from dry to wet, shall be no more ; nor the soul be clogged any more with this worst of burdens, a crazy tabernacle, and a body of death. I sit, and fret, and grieve, to see the weather so bad, and myself so weak and feeble ; my thoughts can fly, but I am still in the study. What a sensible weight is the body to a soul enlarged ! The one is all over heaven, earth, and hell ; and the other quite immoveable ; always incapable, more or less, of executing the soul's inventions. The elephant and the greyhound, the dove and the swine, never were more unequally matched than a body of flesh and blood, and a soul born from above. I decree many things, but they are not established unto me ; I purpose, but my purposes are broken off. " To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." It is a blessing that God works in us to will, seeing he often accepts the will for the deed, as he did the will of Abraham at the offering of Isaac, and the good-will of David respecting building the temple. But it is a grief to me that so excellent a couple should ever be absent from each other. Willing and doing are not always hand in hand. The former is generally

generally found, but the latter is not. To will is present, says Paul, but not the doing. Perhaps the reason may be this: the devil cannot hinder us from willing, but he often hinders us from doing. "I was coming once and again," says Paul, "but Satan hindered." Again: I can will without the body, but the body is often wanted in performing; and, like Pharaoh's wheels, draws heavily, when the soul, like the chariot of Aminadib, or like Jehu, drives furiously. O this frail tabernacle, this busy devil, and this wretched law in the members! I must conclude in this strait between two; and these two make me often waddle. I am ready to halt, and my sorrows are continually before me.

Ever thine,

The Desert,

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

WE received safe your last favour, and I was sorry at the account of your indisposition. Hope it has pleased the Lord ere this to have restored you to health again. Hope you will again have your health established. With respect to myself, I find the world; and every thing in it, is against me, besides the flesh and the devil. But the worst of all calamities that ever befell me is, that God hath hid his blessed face from me. He has fenced up my ways that I cannot pass; he has set darkness in all my paths; he hideth himself with a cloud in his anger; and at times I am ready to fear he is gone for ever, and never will return more. I at present can find no book suit me better than your "Child of Liberty in legal Bondage." It is my companion; and sometimes I think you must have wrote that book on purpose for me, that I might not quite sink under my present distress. Your last letter is a composition of the same bitter ingredients, which you have brought forth from your own experience, not only your former, but your present sensations under
your

your present trial. ' Pardon me if I tell you I tried to suck some sweetness from it. And it has encouraged me a little to hope that I may be brought through; for these have been my companions by day and by night, for these five months past; and I really do believe that I am not near through this perilous path. O, my dear friend, had I but attended to the sound advice you gave me in the second letter you wrote to me, it had been better with me at present than it is, and that was, to keep secret the dealings of God with me, and watch every advance he made towards me, and then, you told me, I should have rejoicing in myself alone! But I have been wiser in my own eyes than seven men that could render a reason. I was not then aware that self was working at the bottom of all; and I find true that saying of the wise man, "A man's pride shall bring him low." And low I am at present, and as fast in the cords of legal bondage as ever a poor soul was. You say, in the book, that is my companion, in this cloudy and dark day, to be favoured with faith in exercise, but one minute, enough to banter the enemy, and predict a future sun rising, is a blessing indeed. This has been the case with me two or three times during the first five months, when God was pleased to shine with a ray of light on a part of his word, and give me to see something of the end for which he was thus dealing with me. But now it seems to be taken from me, and I have had nothing of that

that for these three months past ; though I can say, with you, that I do not feel unappeased wrath or unatoned guilt work in my conscience. These ingredients are not in my cup, which were in my former bondage. But severely do I feel the cruel flames of jealousy burn with a most vehement heat. Nor did I know that it was an ingredient that worked in the heart under a spirit of bondage till I read it in the book my companion. The Tuesday evening you came to my house you seemed to come as a prophet sent of God, and did predict to me the coming of him whom my soul loveth. But the language of my heart, though I did not utter it with my mouth, was the same as the Shunamite's to Elisha, " Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid ;" which was the effect of unbelief in her, and in me ; and, indeed, I am so under the power of unbelief, that I cannot give credit to any thing but what seems to make against me. But certainly true it is, that since that time the darkness has gathered thicker upon me, and I am holden faster in my fetters than I was before, but no light to see where I am. And nothing but almighty power can rend the veil, and bring me forth from this captivity the second time. It will be matter of comfort to know if God lays my case near your heart. I hope you will never cease to pray for me. And do, my dear friend, make it your petition to God that he would be pleased to shine upon the work he has done upon
me

me by his own Spirit, that I may not be deceived in this matter, and take the work of Satan for the work of the Spirit of God ; for I must tell you I have not light to see the place from whence I did fall ; and I know it is only God that can discover this to me. This is a confused jumble, I am almost ashamed to send it to you ; but hope you bear with me and pardon me ; for I am so dark, and feel my mind so confused, that I am not able to express my own feelings. Accept my thanks for all your kind favours bestowed on one so unworthy ; and, if God should give you any thing to send me, I shall be exceeding glad to receive it, and likewise to hear how your health is at present ; and believe me to remain

Your very sincere and affectionate friend

and afflicted sister,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XXIII.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

THINE epistle came safe to hand, favouring sweetly of a second benefit. Refreshings from the presence of the Lord attended it. It was a rich perfume. His name, like an ointment poured forth, came with it. Our unbelief shall never make the faith of God without effect; for, if we believe not, he still abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. Moreover, God will honour his own ministering servants, whom he knows honour him; nor will he let their word fall to the ground; for he will confirm the word of his servants, and perform the counsel of his messengers. The work of God on the souls of his people shall abide for ever. He will carry on the good work begun; he will perfect that which concerns us, and never forsake the work of his own hands. And now, as God has hitherto fulfilled all that I have predicted to thee, and hath made me manifest in thy conscience, and hath given thee a place in my heart to live and die with thee, which joining and knitting together is the work of God's Spirit alone, and is always attended with the bands

of peace and love; by strengthening of which bands the Lord is pleased to communicate nourishment to supply every joint, that the whole body may increase, and edify itself in love; it is from this work that Wisdom receives her revenue; all his tributes of praise and thanksgiving spring from hence. He reaps no harvest but from what he sows; no fruits but from his own plantation. With this work he is particularly and more immediately concerned; for, in carrying on this, all his attributes are engaged; and by the faithful and true Witness it will be performed and perfected, that God may display the riches of his grace in glory by Christ Jesus. Now, that thou mayest know what the various branches of this good work are, and not be wholly ignorant of it, and that thou mayest have somewhat to answer any person who shall appear to glory, but not in heart; I will drop thee a few hints about it, and leave thee to consider the matter, and to compare notes. I mean to compare spiritual things with spiritual; that is, spiritual works within with spiritual words in the book. And, if we take heed to these things, and cleanse our way according to his word, we shall come to a point; for whatsoever the Spirit of God wrote on the hearts of his apostles and prophets, he, by those instruments, wrote the same in the Bible; and an exact copy of it is written on the fleshly tables of all believing hearts; and, when this is done, the quickening

Spirit makes us feel the impressi^on, and afterwards shines gradually upon the word, that we may see that the internal impressi^on exactly agrees with the external revelation. And, when the contents on the paper tally with the impressi^on on the heart, then we are the pillars and ground of the truth, and may safely conclude that the mercy of God in Christ Jesus shall be built up for ever, and, in the glorification of our souls and bodies, "truth shall be settled in heaven." The uncti^on on our souls is two-fold : love and joy are the effects of the anointing within ; and the anointing our eyes with eye-salve is done that we may see, in the word, what he has done on the heart ; and that anointing "teacheth us all things, and is true, and is no lie." And, as he hath taught us, we shall abide in him ; that is, we shall ever abide in the favour, and under the operations, of the holy Spirit of promise, that the offering of us up may be acceptable, we being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Now for a few hints upon those things which God calls his own work. He says, "I am the Lord which search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men." And this work you have an account of by the prophets. "I will search Jerusalem as with candles, and will punish the men that are settled on their lees." In allusion to this our Lord called the apostles the light of the world ; and asks whether candles were lighted up to be put under a bushel ; and tells them to let
their

their light shine before men. And by these he searched Jerusalem, as you see in Peter's audience, who, when cut to the heart, cried out, " Brethren, what shall we do ?" The things for the which they were reprov'd were made manifest by the light which did appear ; for " whatsoever doth make manifest is light." And, when the elect of God among that people were searched into, searched out, and looked up, he then punished the rest that were settled upon their lees of self-righteousness. Another branch of this work of the Lord is, to give us a sight, as well as a feeling sense, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin ; for so he says, " I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee. Now, consider this, ye that forget God." This is done to make us the more sensible of our pardon when it comes, after we have been sufficiently humbled and brought down. The purging of our guilt and filth is called removing the burden ; and chafing our sin from before the eyes of our mind, is termed a blotting out our transgressions as a cloud ; for, as it is sin that separates from God, purging them is making us nigh by the blood of Christ ; and so it follows, " I have blotted out thy transgressions as a cloud ; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." But to return. Under this convincing and convicting work a kind of legal process is carried on between God and the sinner, in which God appears both judge and witness, as you read : " And I will
come

come near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against forcerers, against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, and turn aside the stranger from his right, and that fear not me, saith the Lord." The law is sent home to conscience, and we are summoned to appear at the bar of equity. "Come," saith God, "and let us reason together;" for that is all we are capable of while, in the glass of the law, our sins appear as scarlet and crimson; which sets forth their deep stain and dreadful dye. And here he holds us under this fiery trial till our mouths are stopped, our souls humbled, and we become altogether guilty before God. And, when he has stripped us of all our false coverings, he makes us willing, in the day of his power, to be saved in his own way. And here we stand willing enough to be saved, and put our mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. But "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Nevertheless, under all this sharp exercise God supports us; which is called instructing us with a strong hand, that we may dare to be singular, and not say, "A confederacy" to any enemy of the truth, or stranger to the power of it. When God hath thus chastened us, and taught us out of his law, he then gives us rest from the days of adversity, by leading us to the foundation that he hath laid in Zion, which is called the rock higher than we. Hence the Saviour's assertion, "It is written, And they shall

affections; and crucifies us to this world. And this is fulfilling his ancient promise: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Thus we are taught of God, and then led to his dear Son, and transplanted into him, in whom we find righteousness and strength, which constitutes us trees of righteousness, the right-hand planting of God, that he may be glorified. This, my sister, is the good work of God upon the soul. To a lively hope he begets us; and from the piercing sting of death, from under the ministration of death, and from bondage to the fear of death, he brings his own children; for so it is written, "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." Psalm lxxviii. 20. From death in the law to life in Christ do they pass by faith; and upon Christ, as upon a nail fastened in a sure place, do all the offspring and issue hang their hopes, their expectations, their hearts, with all their burdens, for time and eternity. Read Isaiah xxii. 24. The next thing is, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." And now what remains? That every branch in Christ his heavenly Father purges, that it may bring forth more fruit. And under this purging operation thou wast when my former letter found thee. And thus have I pursued thee, and I have overtaken thee.

thee. And now, seeing this is God's work and way, humbly submit thyself under his hand, and attend to these things a little more, and visit less; and thou shalt reap the benefit of it. Compare thy state with this account, and comfort thyself with these things; for my God will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. My kind love to your spouse. God preserve and bless you both. Amen and amen, says

Thy ready servitor,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXIV.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I CAN no longer be silent in acknowledging your last kind favour, and telling you that it came not to me empty. O the goodness of my God to me, such a wretched, unworthy creature! Well might the apostle say, "What manner of love is this that is bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God!"

But I must begin and tell you where your letter found me ; though I confess it will make my letter appear more like a journal than a letter. I was contending with the Almighty to his face, and telling him, it was in vain to wait on him, or look to him for that which I was seeking for ; and that he knew he had killed me to all but himself, on purpose to aggravate my misery. I likewise called his prophets liars, and said they had prophesied only what they wished might come to pass ; but he knew he never put such things in their mouths. Many times did I read your letters, and God wrought by his Spirit with them, so that I felt my hard heart melt, in some degree, under the power and light that attended the contents to my soul, and contrition and godly sorrow began to operate, and I had a view of the goodness of the Lord to me in keeping me from getting from under his hand, and going where those fled you mentioned. This made my very soul to melt within me. This was the language of my heart, " O Lord, keep me under thy chastening hand as long as thou seest best for me ; choose my path for me ; help me to put my mouth in the dust, and to bear thy indignation, because I have sinned against thee. Only let me never find any soul satisfaction in any thing but in the enjoyment of his blessed presence." Thus I was Friday and Saturday. On sabbath morning I found my mind cloudy and dark. I saw where his excellency was ;
for,

for, very far from the spot I stood upon; I could not bear the rays of his countenance; for surely the face of Moses never shone brighter than his did at that time; and never sure was a soul more burnt in the flames of jealousy than I was. I am sure my feelings could never be equalled but by Satan himself. I had been basking in the rays of God's presence, and now cast down to the lowest hell without a gleam of hope. And, besides this, what further added to my jealousy, I saw the dew sweetly distil on two persons who sat near me. I knew they had found him whom my soul loveth. But on Monday morning he did come indeed, and gave me such a view of his love and faithfulness to his word, oath, and covenant, as my pen nor tongue can never describe. Your prediction was indeed fulfilled; for he came down on my soul as the dew on the mown grass, and as the rain that waters the earth. And such a time in prayer did my soul never experience before. He admitted me into his very heart, and his language to me seemed the same as the king's to Esther, "What is thy petition, and what is thy request? and it shall be granted thee, not only to the half, but the whole of my kingdom." But I found I wanted another enlargement, that I might ask enough; for I saw there was no straitness in God. And the Lord knows what I did ask at this time, for I know not. But, whatever it was, I shall know hereafter; for nothing can be impossible

to this faith. However, in a few hours I found my mind clouded again, and Satan was permitted to assault and suggest to my mind that it was not real, and that I was catching at something I could not hold fast. But these words settled and decided the matter, " It is the voice of my Beloved: behold, he cometh leaping on the mountains, and skipping on the hills." And a sweet peace I found in my soul. However, before the day was past, I felt my mind again beclouded, and my soul disturbed, and Satan suggesting that it was not real; but the above words were attended again, the second time, with power, and kept vibrating through my very soul for, I believe, two hours; and the matter was made clear to me that I was not deceived. ~ On Tuesday morning the Lord met me again in prayer; and, I bless his name, he renewed the same over again, as he did the morning before; and sweetly did he commune with my soul; and he has brought me to sit at his feet, clothed, and in my right mind, and has told me, that " he has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure;" and that he will lead me into the mysteries of it; for the half has not been told me; and never before did I feel such contrition and godly sorrow. It has killed me outright, and, as you say in one of your letters, bleeds my very soul to death. O how much do I need your prayers, that I may be kept near him, that I may not be carried away!

away ! for Satan will use all his efforts to get me again into his sieve. I have communicated this to no soul living but yourself, thanking you for all favours. I know you are wise as an angel of God ; therefore, if you see any thing in this letter that is not produced under the influence of the Spirit of God, fail not to communicate it to me as soon as you can ; for I have reason to be afraid of all my joys. If it should be proved they be false, please to keep the contents of this secret ; for, if they know I am up again, they will be trying to make me the keeper of their vineyards, which, perhaps, would be attended with a neglect of my own. Indeed, at present, I want no conversation with any body ; I am so afraid of losing what I have got. Adieu.

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XXV.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I HAVE been expecting a letter from you every day for this month past, and have felt much at your long silence. Satan has endeavoured to help the matter forward, and has suggested to me what, perhaps, never entered your head. But he is not worth spending any time about; so I will not say any thing more about him, but proceed to tell my dear friend that, since I wrote you last, I have experienced a sweet gale from the south wind, which, for a time, carried all that was not mortal within the veil, and left me nothing but the poor frail tabernacle here below, and even that felt the effects of it so much that it was hardly able to sustain it. Indeed, my dear brother, I hardly knew, for some time, whether in the body, or out of the body; and, had it been the will of my God, glad should I have been to have taken my eternal flight, and left mortality behind. But I am fully persuaded that is not to take place yet; because it is given me to believe that it is appointed for me to bear no small part of the burden and heat of the day; and I am to

stand in many of the Lord's battles. But, however weak I am, he will teach my hands to war, and my fingers to fight; and I trust that no weapon that is formed against me shall prosper; because I know all my enemies are his enemies. I had, three nights ago, a very particular dream, which I well know came from God, and will, I have no doubt, have its accomplishment; and, as you are one of the parties concerned, I will make bold to trouble you with the relation of it. I dreamed I was standing in an open road; you came up to me, and conversed with me for about a quarter of an hour, when you turned from me and went out of my sight. You was no sooner gone than there came up to me a middle-aged woman, very comely in her appearance. She had on a long white robe; she had a soft, smooth, smiling countenance; and very pleasant did she look at me; but I saw the very devil under that robe. I trembled at her appearance till my very joints shook; for I perceived she had very evil designs against me. She very minutely surveyed me from head to foot. I therefore took my garments and girded them round me as tight as possibly I could, and stood trembling before her, as I thought her intention was to rob me. I had not stood long before you came to me the second time; which when she saw, she turned, and went out of my sight. You conversed with me as before, though I do not recollect any thing of the conversation.

I secretly

I secretly wished you not to leave me, as I knew the flatterer was at no great distance; but I did not ask you. You turned and went out of my sight again; and no sooner was you gone, but this woman came up to me again, but somewhat nearer. I felt the same sensations as before, and, as before, took my garments, and girt them round me with all the strength I had, and stood trembling before her, expecting her to fall on me. I wished for you to come again; but you came no more. This was done three times; and I believe with my trembling I awoke. What it all means I must leave to God and future discovery; but sure I am, by the repetitions of the dream, and by my strange feelings under it, that some sore trial awaits me. I know that the church of Rome, and all false churches, as well as the foolish virgins, are called women, and are set forth as very gaudy and gay in their dress, as this woman was; and I believe it is the business and delight of such persons to rob the children of God. But who can take away the garment of imputed righteousness, or lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? My garment I wrapt close round me; and I believe it is faith that puts this robe on, and keeps it close. However, suffer we must; and, "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him;" for our consolations are as sure as our sufferings. The Lord promises strength equal to the day; and, if so, I shall stand and withstand.

My

My other three succeeding epistles you told me drew some secrets from your heart; and I am sure they did my foul good; and, as this is the third since you wrote me, I hope these will do the same again. I saw the herald last night, and he was as well as usual. Hope this will meet you and your family well. Believe me to remain

Your affectionate friend and sister

in the Lord Jesus Christ,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XXVI.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

HAVING a little leisure time upon my hands, I am inclined to write to thee, having a desire to know how thou doest. But which way to steer my course, so as to find thee, is the difficult task that I have undertaken. In my former
epistles

epistles I always went before thee by the spirit of prophecy ; and, as thou camest after, thou didst set to thy seal that the word of the Lord was true. But, moving from my old habitation, and the troubles which have attended it, have so interrupted our correspondence, that I know not where thou art. However, I will pursue the footsteps of the flock ; and I have no doubt but I shall overtake thee, either in the vallies, or in the heights of Israel.

To go back to the days of thy dispersion, when thou wast stumbling upon the dark mountains, must be altogether vain. The Shepherd's promise to thee in that state hath been fulfilled : " I will seek my sheep, and search them out ; and I will gather them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark days." From these dismal and dark regions he hath put thee forth, and gone before thee, and caused thee to pass under the rod, and to hear his voice ; and he hath led thee into the bond of the covenant, that thou mightest be bound up in the bundle of life with the chief Shepherd. This is the summit of all happiness, the height of Zion's dignity, the high mountain and the eminent on which so many have said, " I shall never be moved ; thou, Lord, of thy goodness hast made my hill so strong." Upon this eminence he carries the lambs in his bosom, as well as leads gently those that
are

are with young. The former feel the warmth of his heart, the latter the strength of his arm. But it is vexatious, grievous, yea, and dangerous, coming down from this mount; because the horrible pit and the miry clay are so near to the foot of it, one of old tumbled into it: "I stick fast; I am come into the deep waters, so that the floods overflow me." This stiffened his joints, and relaxed his nerves, and made him stagger and waddle in his walk. "I am ready to halt, and my sorrows are continually before me." This being put out of the bosom, and driven from the suckling-house, and turned adrift to go behind, and only now and then allowed to hear the Shepherd's voice, and being bid to follow him instead of riding in the bosom, appears to be hard treatment. However, he always heals them that halt, binds up that which is broken, and feeds that which is faint: "The Lord is my shepherd, therefore I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." Thus to lie down and find rest and satisfaction, encompassed and supported by the lively oracles, or life-giving words of promise, and to be led by the streams which flow from the river of divine pleasure, makes us fat and flourishing. But, alas! these vanish again, and we lose sight of these waters: "I am a stranger with thee; hide not thy commandment

commandment from me. O, when wilt thou come and comfort me!" Here the old man, and the sheep's worst enemy, entangle him; he is hung up: " Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net. The troubles of my heart are enlarged; O bring thou me out of my distresses!" Out he comes again: " I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities, and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy. Thou hast set my feet in a large room." But he soon wanders out of this into the desert, and gets upon the barren mountains of Sinai, and here gets both blinded and impoverished: " I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments." What part of this path of tribulation my sister is now on, or which of these footsteps of the flock suits her present steps, I know not; but, when I saw her last, she was shut up, and could not come forth; and, when I informed her of a future enlargement, her answer agreed with that of her sister of old, " Nay, thou man of God, do not lie to thine handmaid;" for I shall never be comfortable any more in this world. Has experience, from that time to this, proved that saying to be true? or did the Lord confirm the word of his servant, and perform the counsel of his messenger?

Once more: Hast thou found, in the course of
thy

thy pilgrimage, any thing to confirm that common saying of many, namely, that those who, by the Spirit, are brought once into liberty, are never exercised with, nor entangled in, legal bondage again? or whether this bondage be not one ingredient in the cup of Zion's sorrow, which all must drink of, more or less, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth? A solution of these matters will lay me under an obligation, which shall be acknowledged with that thankfulness which I hope will ever abound in

Your affectionate friend and brother,

From the Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXVII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I RECEIVED your kind letter, and am obliged to you for your kind inquiry after my spiritual welfare. Your letter found me in the footsteps of the flock; though I must tell you it
did

did not find me on the heights of Zion. I am got on the barren mountains of Sinai ; and my soul is as the mountains of Gilboa, without either dew or rain : therefore these words of David suit me, " I have gone astray like a lost sheep ; seek thy servant : " for I can say also, with him, that I do not forget God's commandments. Since I wrote to you last, which is now more than four months, I have been led in a strange path. If you recollect, I wrote to you just before the Lord had granted me that second enlargement from the bondage in which I had lain for five months. This was a sweet revival of the work. But, alas ! gradually did those sweet sensations on my soul wither, and down from the mount I came before I was aware ; and for two months I had not the least light on the path I was in ; only I knew what I had lost. Nor could I get any help from the sanctuary, nor strength out of Zion ; and, for want of light, I could not describe my strange feelings to any one ; yet I was not in deep distress all this time, though I knew I was not comfortable. However, I was sure it was a path I had not been in before. But, about a month ago, under one of the orations of his Majesty's herald, the Lord was pleased to shine with a ray of light while he was describing a speech of my great great grandmother's, recorded in the annals of antiquity ; where she says, " I sleep, but my heart waketh. " In a moment I was given to see that I was in the
same

same case, and her prayer was that moment mine ; and from my heart I could say, " Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south ;, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Ever since the Lord brought me into the liberty of the gospel, these words have perplexed me, why the venerable spouse should wish to awake the north wind. But I believe I know the secret now ; for I had rather be under the influence of that gale than to lie wind-bound, which is my case at present. But, upon this discovery of my state, my beloved seemed to put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. This seemed, in a measure, to rouse me from my spiritual lethargy, and a little fervour was communicated to my spirit, which enabled me to arise and open to my beloved. But, as it fared with her of old, so it does with me ; for my beloved has withdrawn himself, and is gone ; I sought him, but I could not find him ; I called him, but he gave me no answer ; and, since that time, I have lost that little fervour I then found on my spirit, so that I have no heart to seek him. But the light which discovers where I am remains still with me. This is my present state ; and how long I am to lie at anchor I know not ; but I do not, at present, feel the least breeze from the everlasting hills to fill the sails. I feel this a sad case indeed, and can find no access to God ; no faith in exercise to plead his word of promise at a throne

of grace. Therefore, if you see my beloved, tell him that I am sick of love.

The questions you ask a solution of are not (I am sure) for your own information; but, whatever your motive may be, I am bound, from a grateful sense of my obligations to you, to answer any question you shall ask, if it lies in my power; and I hope I shall ever bear my testimony against such a lie as that, viz. that the believer, after being once brought into the liberty of the gospel, is never entangled again in legal bondage; my own experience is point blank against it. Therefore I know that those who assert such things know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. For I am sure this is the third time that I have been in legal bondage since the Lord was pleased to proclaim liberty to my soul, which is but two years come next week; and I think my wanderings have been something similar to those of the prophet Elijah, when he went a day's journey in the wilderness. I have always been made to experience the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, before I have been favoured with the still small voice which has brought me back again; and have been made as bitter in my spirit as was the prophet, when he sat under the juniper-tree, and requested of the Lord that he might die, though he knew it was contrary to God's will. Moreover, I am in a strait to know what this can be. I know it is the effect of legal bondage; and I

have felt it as keen and as galling since my deliverance as I did before, only with this difference (as you observed to me in a former letter), " that unappeased wrath, and unatoned guilt, are not mixed with it."—But I must conclude with thanking you kindly for all favours, and begging a continuance of them, attended with an interest in your prayers for me, that I may be kept from every snare that Satan may spread for my feet, and that the Lord would condescend to visit me again, and restore to me the joys of his salvation, and uphold me with his free Spirit, that the wilderness and the solitary place may be made glad and flourish, and the desert blossom as the rose. Then joy and gladness will be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody, and not till then. My partner joins in kind respects. Believe me to remain, as much as ever,

Your affectionate friend and sister

in the Lord Jesus,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XXVIII.

To PHILOMELA, of the King's Dale.

I HAVE paid several visits this week, both to you on the hill, and to those in the valley, only I was absent in body; so that my appearance was imperceptible; somewhat like that of the beloved standing behind the wall, and shewing himself through the lattice. Whether any troubles have happened to either of your families, I know not; but you have been much on my mind when I have been secretly engaged in that greatest, best, most blessed, and most glorious privilege that ever perishing sinners were favoured with.

Private prayer is my court visits to my God, the life and breath of my soul; it is the ascension of the soul to the Almighty, and its returns are the descension of Christ to the soul's help. It is the assuasion of grief, the easement of a burdened heart, and the vent of a joyful one. It is the rich favour of mystical incense, the overflowings of a living fountain, an all-prevailing sacrifice, the delight of the Almighty, and a ravishing charm to the heavenly bridegroom.

Prayer

Prayer has made the Sun of Righteousness to stand still in his firmament, though discharged from the lips of a blind beggar. It has brought the Ancient of Days to dwell in a bush ; and even a worm, by this simple mean, has held the King of kings in the galleries ; yea, Omnipotence itself has been constrained to say, " Let me go, for the day breaketh." But dust and ashes replied, " I will not, except thou blest me." And he blessed him there, and allowed that himself had been conquered, and styled his antagonist a prevailer with God. Thus Judah's Lion was overcome, and the lame duck waddled off with the victory.

Prayer is a defence against the spirit of this world, and a guard against the inroads of vanity ; it is a maul upon the head of the old man, and a lash of scorpions for the devil.

Prayer is a bridle in the jaws of a persecutor, a spell to a voracious enemy, a dagger at the heart of a heretic, a key to parables and dark sayings, and a battering-ram on the walls of salvation. " The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

Prayer opens the bountiful hand of God, opens the door of mercy, keeps Christ in the throne of our affections, and covers every rival and usurper with shame and confusion of face.

Prayer is my royal-exchange, where I have brought thousands of cares, burdens, snares, troubles, vexations, temptations, doubts, fears, misgiv-

ings of heart, sorrows of mind, fainting fits, unbelieving fits, fits of love-sickness, fits of carnal and spiritual jealousy, hardness of heart, rebellion of heart, and ingratitude of heart; together with every other disorder, as the leprosy, the evil of the heart, the plague of the heart, and the plague of the head; together with deaf ears, blind eyes, feeble knees, languid hands, halting feet, and a stiff neck; with many oppositions, persecutions, false charges, slanderous accusations, and vile reproaches; and have, by this simple mean, got rid of them all at times. I have gone to this change with all sorts of devils, as an unclean devil, a false preaching devil, a blasphemous devil, a reforming devil, a furious devil, a fawning devil, and a sleepy devil, and have left them in the hands of him that could manage them, when my strength has been all gone, and self-despair has seized me. All these, and thousands more, have I taken to this royal-exchange; and you know that one of the names of a believer is that of an exchanger (Matt. xxv. 27); and I have received in return thousands of kisses, blessings, mercies, and deliverances; many refreshings, renewings, revivals, restorations, and returns of comfort, peace, love, and joy; together with fresh discoveries, love tokens, wholesome truths, profound mysteries, glorious glimpses, bright prospects, terrestrial views, undoubted evidences, infallible proofs, heavenly lessons, confirming visits, conspicuous deliverances, earnest,

earnests, pledges, and foretastes, reviving cordials, precious promises, or bank notes, payable this day, and every day through life, and even to millions of ages after date, signed, sealed, and delivered, by Jehovah himself: and God knows, and conscience too, that I lie not.

Prayer has scattered many confederate enemies of my soul, marred the schemes of Jacobins, frustrated the tokens of liars, and made diviners mad. It counteracts the designs of Satan and his dear children; it hath made me the enemy of the world, the rival of impostors, the envy of hypocrites, an eyesore to the devil, an admiration to perishing finners, a spectacle to the world, and a wonder to myself. "He that prays to his Father, that seeth in secret, shall be rewarded openly."

By prayer the poor come up from the dust, and the beggar from the dunghill, and get a seat among the princes of God's people, and an inheritance in the throne of glory. Mental prayer hath brought me from sleeping in a barn to a comfortable lodging, from a lodging to a cottage, from a cottage to a house, and from a house to a little farm; it hath brought food for my need, apparel for my use, furniture for my dwelling, fuel to my hearth, money to my pocket, and faithful friends to my heart, and hath kept my pot boiling almost thirty years. "For all these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, that I may do these things for them." Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

Prayer brought me from the coal-barge to a pulpit, from being a servant of servants to be a ruler in the Lord's household; it delivered my hands from the shovel, and my shoulders from the sacks.

Yea, earnest desires hath raised four houses of prayer for God, and brought the presence of God into the houses; it hath brought living waters to my well, oil to my cruse, joy to my heart, and a blessing to many souls. And what shall I say more? Why, prayer hath brought little animals to my fields, living creatures to my yard, a horse for my use, when the King's business requires haste, and a vehicle at my command in inclement weather. This has caused the very subjects to gather together about me, and the eyes of the envious to look on me, who have seen it, and grieved, grudged, and gnashed, and wandered up and down, and gone round the walls of my dwelling grinning like a dog. "No good thing will I withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Prayer hath brought the souls of some, when departed, back into their bodies again. It engages the Almighty on the side of the suppliant, and establishes an alliance with God. It hath stopped the bottles of heaven for three years and six months, and opened them again at the expiration of that term; yea, and brought a miraculous plenty into the house of a poor widow, while destruction and famine were riding all around in universal triumph,

triumph. " All things are possible to him that believeth ; " " and whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Prayer hath brought health to the sick, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, eyes to the blind, life to the dead, salvation to the lost ; and even driven the devil himself from the heart of many, and brought the God of heaven to dwell in his room.

• Prayer is pouring out the soul before God, and shewing him our troubles ; it is casting our cares upon him that careth for us, and our burdens upon him in whom we are to say we have righteousness and strength ; it is opening to our well-beloved, opening our minds, our hearts, and our mouths, to him who tells us to let him hear our voice, and see our faces, the one being sweet, and the other comely. This is besieging an everlasting kingdom, moving the throne of grace, and coming with a treble rat-tat at the door of mercy.

In prayer we must take no denial, if we have but a feeling sense of our wants, a scriptural warrant to go upon, or one promise to plead ; we must sue, argue, reason, plead, supplicate, intercede, confess, acknowledge, thank, bless, praise, adore, repeat, importune, observe, take hold of, and turn every thing that we can to our own advantage, so as we can but get something for the soul. Sensible sinners, that are poor and needy, have gotten many invitations, encouragements, precedents, promises,
the

the covenant, the oath of God, the merits of Christ, and all his covenant engagements, undertakings, and performances; the covenant characters that he sustains, his incarnation, and near relationship to us; together with all the glorious train of divine perfections found in the proclamation of the name of God to Moses; for they all harmonize and shine in Christ crucified. Thus far I had written in this second epistle, my dear sister, when your last letter came to hand. I see where you are, and will endeavour to point it out to you.

And now observe: when God the Father is about to bring us, as his chosen children, to his dearly beloved Son, that we may be openly and experimentally espoused to him, he comes near to us in a broken law, as it is written, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, till the pit be digged up for the wicked." This rest from the days of adversity is to be found only in Christ Jesus. He is our rest and our refreshing; and this rest Christ promises to them that are weary and heavy laden. This lading is sin, guilt, and wrath; and this labouring, and being weary of it, is our fruitless toil under the legal yoke; for the law works wrath and death in us, and this is truly hard labour; and, as we have no success in it, we faint, and get weary of it. This, my sister, is our heavenly Father's teaching; and so saith the Saviour,

Saviour, " It is written, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me; and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." When Christ espouseth us, he doth five things for us; but, antecedent to this, God, by the application of the law, makes us feel our need of them all. When the law comes home, the

First thing that it does is to discover our filthiness. " By the law is the knowledge of sin;" and sin by the law becomes exceeding sinful.

2dly. The curse of the law, and the wrath of God, pierce through the poor breastplate of all self-righteousness, which convinces us that we are unrighteous in the sight of God.

3dly. It discovers and stirs up our carnal enmity. " The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be."

4thly. The law fills us with fear and torment, and leaves us in bondage to it. And,

5thly, It discovers our blindness and our ignorance, and makes the old veil that is upon our hearts a darkness that may be felt. Such a soul, and no other, is a fit object for Christ to embrace; and, under these circumstances, God leads us to him, as he did Eve to the first Adam; and Christ receives us, at his hand, as his gift.

The first thing that Christ does for us is to
cleanse

cleanse us from our filth, which the law has discovered to us : “ From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.”

The second thing is to bring forth the best robe, and put it upon us. This is the wedding-garment : “ The Lord (says Zion) hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” Now the filthy garments of self-righteousness, discovered by the law, are put off, and this change of raiment is put on.

3dly. The ring of everlasting love is brought forth to adorn the hand. This ring of divine love subdues the carnal enmity discovered and stirred up by the law.

4thly. The next thing is, the shoes are brought forth for the feet ; which shoes are peace with God through Christ, and peace with our own conscience through the application of the atonement : “ Having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” These shoes much charm the heavenly wooer : “ How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter !”

The fifth thing is, the Sun of Righteousness now shines upon us with healing in his beams. He views us with approbation, complacency, and delight. This is the saving manifestation of himself to us, and to all that the Father hath given him.

him. This removes the old veil from the heart, which hung so heavy upon us under the law: the face being turned to the Lord, and we emboldened and encouraged to look up, the veil is taken away. All this work is done, in a greater or less degree, on the day of our espousals, and on the day of the gladness of the bridegroom's heart. And now let me shew thee the hand that faith, as an instrument, hath in all this.

First. Christ is the fountain open that cleanses from all sin, and faith applies the atonement: God purifies our hearts by faith.

2dly. The Lord Jesus "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and faith lays hold of his righteousness, and puts it on. Hence it is said that "the righteousness of Christ is to all and upon all that believe."

3dly. Now, as faith has the honour of being the hand of the soul, which hand appropriates all these things to us; so faith, as the hand of the soul, is honoured with wearing this ring, which is the eternal love of God: "Faith worketh by love." And, as a wedding-ring is an emblem of love, and, when put on the proper finger, is a sure token from a husband to a woman of her wedlock with him; so the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit of God is a sure token of our espousals to Christ, and of eternal union with him, and of God the Father's love to us in him. And, as there is, at times, in an affectionate young
woman

woman wooed, doubts and fears whether her intended will prove faithful at last or not, which will not be removed until she is espoused with a ring; so here the match will not appear clear to the soul; nor will doubts, fears, misgivings of heart, and torment, be cast out; till perfect love takes place, or until we are made perfect in love, or until this ring be put on the hand of faith; the greatest, the hardest, and most difficult work of faith being this, to persuade the soul that Christ loves it with an everlasting love; and even faith's persuasion must be attended with a feeling sense of this love too, or else the soul cannot rest satisfied. But, when this is done, the match is made, and is indissoluble, and the soul is more than sure of it. And now,

4thly, Faith puts on the shoes. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

5thly. Faith now looks through the veil, and sees him that is invisible; yea, she sees the promised seed, and embraces him. And it is this eye that captures the heart of the heavenly wooer: "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes." This, my beloved sister, is our espousals to the Lord Jesus; thus comes the second Eve to the second Adam. But still the Father doth not let his daughter go out of his hand; no,
"None,"

"None," saith the Bridegroom, "shall pluck them out of my hand;" and adds, "My Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Thus God holds her, and claims her as his daughter, and Christ holds her and claims her as his spouse, and as his Father's choice and gift to him. And, indeed, it was our heavenly Father that decreed, proposed, and made this match. Thus have I shewed thee how we become dead to the law that we may be married to another, even to him that is raised from the dead, that we may bring forth fruit unto God, even as the branch in the vine brings forth grapes.

But now observe what the Saviour says: "I am the vine, and ye are the branches, and my Father is the husbandman; every branch in me that beareth fruit my Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." After we have enjoyed the dearly beloved of our souls for a few months, our love, our simplicity, meekness, contrition, tenderness, filial fear, &c. abate in their exercise; and we begin to creep into self, wax proud, get secure and careless; dream of ease all the way, and are very nice, and rather dainty; nothing but the best wine of the kingdom, and the very marrow of the feast, will do for us; we must shew ourselves, seek admiration and applause, and appear to be something. But, when the Father sees this, he takes us in hand again; he visits our sins
with

with the rod, and our iniquities with scourges, as he says he will do; he turns us loose on the barren mountains of Sinai, he exercises us with legal bondage again. This stirs up every inbred corruption, which astonishes us; this convinces us of the need of diligence and watchfulness, and that we have not much to be proud of, seeing the root of every sin is still in us, though guilt is purged and sin is subdued by grace. And here our beloved withdraws himself, and is gone. He is not to be found at Horeb, but at Zion. From this mount we get nothing but barrenness, dryness, and deadness of soul. These things falling upon us, bring us to rue our pride, security, lightness, and folly; and, though we come no more under the curse, nor under vindictive wrath nor unpardoned guilt, yet it is a grievous yoke to an heaven-born soul, and not a little mortifying to one of the spouse's dignity. Bitter reflections, cruel jealousies, and humbling mortifications, attend this purging rod. And it is very debasing to appear with the yoke of a slave, and a fallen countenance, like a thief, before the more meek and lowly soul; as it is written "Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women! My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices." He was gone down to them that were more meek and lowly. But when we are humbled the Father leads us back again to the enjoyment of Christ Jesus, who is God's salvation to the ends of the earth;

earth; and we are again influenced by a spirit of love, of power, and of a sound mind; and now we are all tenderness, care, and circumspection, simplicity, meekness, and gratitude. But, alas! this soon wears off again, and then another purging comes upon the fruitful branch; and, after that is over, sweet union is felt again, and we feel our abiding in him; and do, by these means, bring forth fruit: and thus "we go in and out, and find pasture." This, my dear sister, is the purging hand that thou art now under. Thou art, for the third time, under the all-wise management of the great husbandman; and he is puzzling and confounding thy wisdom, and taking off some of thy luxurious branches, and casting down some of thy high-reasonings and contentions, which exalt themselves against the knowledge of him. And now for the spouse's request in the Song. Know thou that, when God shook the house where the apostles were assembled, together with the rushing of a mighty wind, and filled them all with the holy Comforter, under which influence they went forth and wrought, and the Lord worked by them, confirming their word with signs, that then was fulfilled this prophecy, "And the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go forth with whirlwinds of the south," Zech. ix. 14. Thus is the spirit of love called the south wind; wind being a known emblem of the Holy Ghost. Read Isaiah, chap. xl.

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Whereas

Whereas the wrath of God in the law, which stirs up our enmity, is the spirit of bondage to fear; and, as it brings a cold chill on our love, and much fear and trembling, it is therefore called the north wind. Hence Solomon, knowing that bondage always precedes liberty, the one bringing grief and the other joy, says, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider; for God hath set the one against the other." Prosperity is the time when our Lord embraces us; but our adversity is the time when the Lord refrains from embracing. Hence Solomon represents the spouse as being dissatisfied with her carnal ease, and dead, indifferent state; and that, to such a hungry soul, the bitterness of legal bondage would be sweeter than such a dead frame. He sets forth the spouse as praying thus: "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out;" knowing that there would be no divine embraces till humbling trials had taken place. In this way is the believer purged. Take notice further, that, as some souls are called servants, and are under the law, in bondage to it, and strangers to grace; so gracious souls, though often humbled, and exercised with the bondage of the law, are still under grace: the former being a corrupt tree in its natural state, and the other a good tree, purged, and made good by the grace of God. Solomon represents death as a
woodcutter,

woodcutter, cutting both down, and both falling under their own proper influence; or as bending under that wind that blows upon them: "Whether the tree falls toward the north, or toward the south, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be." No change shall be made in the soul after death. The former dies in self and self-righteousness, looking to the law; the latter dies in faith, looking to Jesus: and so shall each appear in the great day. Let my sister, therefore, kiss the chastening rod, and consider that she procures it to herself, and God appoints it for her good, and it is intended to make the spouse fruitful. But not so the servant, who is in a false profession; who, without being dead to the law, or divorced from it, yet claims Christ the second husband before the first be dead. These are otherwise dealt with; and so it follows: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away;" as he did Judas. And to such, and only such, in the most dreadful sense, is that awful text applicable, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" as every fruitless branch doth, which God the Father takes away from Christ, and from his church. These soon wither, and soon burn. If any thing in this scrawl is encouraging, comforting, or establishing, receive it as one espoused to the Lamb of God; for "all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or Christ, or life, or death, or things present,

present, or things to come; all are yours;" and, among the rest, in the indissoluble bond of the everlasting covenant, I subscribe myself, in the Covenant Head, and for his sake,

Devotedly yours,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXIX.

To NOCTUA AURITA, of the Desert.

I HAVE received safe your very valuable epistle, and I thank you kindly for the same. I was somewhat surprised at your writing a letter to me on that subject at that time. I will give you a little account how it has been with me since I wrote to you last.

The day after I wrote you the letter, which you know informed you that I was lying at anchor, wind bound, an unexpected breeze sprung up. I did expect the south wind, but, alas! it was the
north

north wind ; and I have been for a fortnight tossed with no small tempest ; infomuch that, at times, I have despaired even of life, and my mouth hath uttered perverse things before God. Such rebellion have I found working within, such contending with the Almighty, such unbelief prevailing, together with such deadness and barrenness, and such bitterness of spirit, that I think I never felt before. I am kept at such a distance from God, shut quite up in prayer, and not a word to plead before him, which made me cry out, " All these things are against me." I could get nothing under the word ; and therefore I have come away from the house of God raging like a rebel ; and have found true what you mentioned in your ' Child of Liberty in legal Bondage,' that, was it not for the strong hand of God on such souls, the ways of Zion would be unoccupied by them. I am sure this is true ; for my feelings at that time were quite the reverse of David's when he said, " How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts ! my soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord. When shall I come and appear before God ?" But not this, but the former, was the state of my mind when I received your letter ; and, when I read what you wrote on the subject of prayer, it caused desperation, in some measure, to work within me. Well, thought I, if this is the way that these enemies are to be overcome, what is to become of me ? Pray I cannot ;

cannot; therefore, for ought I see, I must have their company. I had said, when I lay wind-bound, that I had rather be in the storm than lie so. And a storm it has been to me, with a witness. Having thus given you the dark side, I will proceed to inform you how the tempest was made to cease.

On Monday evening last I went to Bethel in all this storm. His excellency's oration was, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer." This set me a quarrelling with him. Well, thought I, there will be nothing for me this night; I shall go home worse than I came out, as I did last night. I think, had he picked the sacred records throughout, he could not have found a subject that is more contrary to my present feelings. But no sooner did he begin to open than the contents distilled as the dew. The devil fled, unbelief got a blow, carnal reason was so put to the blush as to be forced to retire; nor have they dared to shew their rebellious heads since.

On Tuesday morning, on taking up the records of Zion, my eyes were directed to the following proverb: "The ear that heareth the reproof of life shall abide among the wise." I cannot express what a sweet light accompanied these words, which gave me to see what I had received the evening before. My mind was carried above the literal sense of the words. I understood

derstood what the ear there spoken of is, even the ear of the soul; the same that Christ himself spoke of when he said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." This ear was given me; and what the Lord caused me to hear was, the reproof of life; because it was attended with a quickening influence to my soul. And that it was the voice of God, by his word and his Spirit, I have not a single doubt; because, on those three evenings, the devil, unbelief, and carnal reason, were forced to make their retreat, whose plea before was so powerful in my heart. And this visit was attended with a sweet persuasion, yea, an assurance, that I shall be found at last among the wise virgins, when the Lord comes with the midnight cry.

I think my sensations are at present somewhat like David's, when he said, "By this I know that thou favourest me, because my enemies do not triumph over me." I believe the Lord will never let me go out of his hands until he hath made me meet for the inheritance. He will put me into a thousand fires, that my dross and tin may be purged from me.

I have no larger paper, or I should have wrote you more at this time on some parts of your letter. I was sorry to hear, by a letter you wrote to my brother, that you was indisposed. I hope ere now you are about again, which I shall be very glad to hear as soon as convenient. Mr.

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H—— joins me in kind love, and thanks you
for your letter. Believe me to remain

Your very affectionate friend

and sister in the Lord Jesus,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA,

LETTER XXX.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale,

THINE epistle comforted my heart.
My hope of you is steadfast. Nothing ever raised
a doubt in my mind of the goodness of thy state
but thy long abode on mount Tabor ; for, when
once meekness, contrition, godly sorrow, com-
punction of heart, self-abasement, and humility,
wear off, and dryness and lightness attend our
joy, there is danger. Pride and self-seeking creep
in ; nor is watchfulness and diligence in prayer
attended to. The vessel goes on, but wants bal-
last ; and, when the rod comes on, we fall many
leagues

leagues back. But now, blessed be God, we keep pace ; we are in one and the same way. " If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him." If we share in the afflictions, so shall we in the consolations. I have had some uncommon seasons of refreshing of late ; I mean, secret refreshings on my own spirit. His soul humbling advances towards me dissolved me, and sensibly affected both my body and soul. My hair moved upon my head, and I could feel my blood run in my veins. His presence, his unparalleled condescension, the freedom and the familiarity that he used with me, made my soul soar aloft in the most profound gratitude. I was obliged to stand still, and weep it out, for my mind floated on the river of self-abasing and unspeakable pleasure. The world and all about me seemed reduced to the drop of a bucket, or the small dust of a balance ; my eyes poured out before him the tears of undisssembled love, and I kept waving my hand, and coyly putting away the effects of his undeserved visit, crying out, " I am not worthy, I am not worthy, I am not worthy, I am not worthy." But, like himself, for he is like no other, he pressed his good-will, and the tokens of his eternal love, upon me, without taking the least notice of my repeated cries of unworthiness. My soul's unwearied enemy, who seldom leaves me one whole day together, fled, and not a corruption moved, nor a wandering thought sprung up, to lead my
mind

mind astray. I had three of these unexpected visits; but they were transient, like those of a way-faring man, who turns aside and tarries but a night. But I knew that they were earnest of more enduring and uninterrupted felicity. Soon after this my implacable enemy returned with double force; not to dispute me out of the reality of what I enjoyed, for I have felt more of that than ever he did, and know the sweetness of it better than he does; nor did he attempt to call in question my interest. He has dropt that for upwards of twenty years; nay, he has acknowledged it, and confessed it, when he hath wanted to tempt me to presumption. But, as all the doubts that his lies have raised in my mind could never move me from the foundation, so all his acknowledgments of the goodness of my state never added to my establishment. He can neither bless us at all, nor curse us at all. The work that he came to do was to stir up hard thoughts, prejudices, and enmity, at the best of friends, because I was then deserted, and my mind suffered to be defiled with a foul-mouthed devil, a rebellious and most blasphemous Jacobin. This word flew into my mind, "But I gave myself unto prayer." I took the hint; and, for three or four days, shut myself up, for the space of four or five hours in a day, to attend upon that very thing. And never to be sure did that holy and blessed Spirit, that all-prevailing intercessor, that quintessence

essence of all meekness, simplicity, and purity, help my infirmities more. I was amazed at the fortitude, boldness, freedom, fervour, argument, and powerful pleadings, that he equipped and furnished me with. Well might the Ancient of Days say to his apostles, " I will send you a Comforter, which the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." For years have I watched and attended to the secret and wonderful operations and influences of that benign and unchangeable friend of sinners, and have admired his quick, seasonable, and invariable counsel, cautions, and instructions, and have often called him by all the sweet names of heavenly Dove, sweet One, blessed Comforter, sure and faithful Witness, yea, and every sweet and pathetic name that my heart could indite, or my lips utter; and, while I have been heaping them upon his blessed head, he has kept my mind tranquil, and his pleasing operations have wonderfully proclaimed his approbation of my simple encomiums. Soon after this I fell ill, and have been laid by a fortnight, during which time he left me not, but favoured me more than usual; and one night I had the following dream. I dreamed that I was sitting at table with many of my friends. I do not remember any entertainment on the table. My mind was chiefly taken up at looking at my friends; and, among
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the rest, there sat the Lord Jesus Christ in person ; and I knew him immediately ; nor did he vanish out of my sight ; and I found my mind inclined to put two questions to him. I said to him, Lord, there are but few in this world that know thee, and there is bread enough in our Father's house, and to spare ; and, as there are but few that know thee, and as thou hast but a few to feed, how is it then, that thou givest us so little ? He smiled, but gave me no answer. But I thought that every one at the table were looking at him, waiting for his reply ; which convinced me that my open question was the language of all their hearts. As I could not succeed in this question, I put another, and the eyes of all at the table seemed to look at me. I said, When you begin your work on us, you spare no pains, nor let our souls find rest, until you have weaned us from every thing under heaven ; nor will you appear satisfied till you have brought us to love you with all our heart, and with all our soul ; and, when you have gained this, what can be the reason of your leaving us, provoking us, and trying us, in so dreadful a manner ? The eyes of all the company, as soon as I had done with my question, were turned from me, and looked at him. But all that I got was another pleasing smile ; for my beloved gave me no answer. I cannot, at this time, describe to my dear sister how dead my soul is to this world, nor how dead this world is to me. Never did

did I see so clearly as now the meaning of the former and latter rain, mentioned Hosea vi. 3, James v. 7. The former shower, at conversion, I understand, when the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, took place; when righteousness, joy, peace, and praise, sprung up. This purged from guilt and filth, and a wonderful crop of the fruits of the Spirit succeeded. But the latter rain, at death, which is to root up and purge off the very inbeing of sin, must be a most stupendous work! The work of regeneration, and that of changing our vile bodies, and fashioning them like unto the glorious body of Christ, cannot be greater than this. But this is the thing that he hath spoken to us of; and then there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts. And I must tell thee that, at times, it is much on my mind, according to what I do now and then feel, that the latter rain is not far from me. "O then shall the fruit of the earth be excellent and comely, when he that laid the foundation of the earth shall plant the heavens!" Isa. li. 16. "Then shall there be no more treading down, trouble, nor perplexity, in the valley of vision." Isa. xxii. 5. In this confidence I subscribe myself

Yours to serve in the kingdom
and patience of Christ,

In the Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER

LETTER XXXI.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I CANNOT express how much I feel myself indebted to you for your soul-strengthening and soul-establishing epistle; for such it is indeed to me; though one part of it caused me sorrow of heart; and it will cause the same sorrow to thousands after the Lord takes you from us. But you have borne the burden and heat of the day, and the Lord has appointed the period when you are to rest from your labours. But, O how few labourers there are in the vineyard, though the harvest is truly great! It rejoiced my heart to hear of those sweet visits the Lord has favoured you with. I know something of them, though but in a small measure. I have been favoured with but few of them of late. I seem to be called to sharp conflicts. It gave me great satisfaction to find you acknowledge I am led in the same path with yourself; by which I think you mean the path of tribulation. Indeed, my dear brother, I am led to see more and more that it is the only way to the kingdom. My present standing greatly differs from what it was some time back.

back. I am not led in the expectation of much sensible enjoyment while in this wilderness; though I know that it is only the comfortable presence of the dear Redeemer which makes an heaven upon earth. But the inheritance is not to be enjoyed here, but only the earnest. I think you will not misunderstand me (but I know I am very blundering at conveying my ideas) in thinking I speak too slightly of those visits. But I am sure I was long seeking them as the only food I was to live on. But I see now that the just are to live by faith; and a daily cross is appointed for me. And I think that the Lord shewed me this some time before I was brought to submit to put my shoulders under the burden. But now I am convinced there is no growing in the divine life without trials. Never did I see, as I do now, the meaning of those words of Hezekiah, when he said, "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit; so wilt thou revive me, and cause me to live." I can see now that the sharpest trials I have been exercised with have proved the greatest blessing to my soul. I thought, when I was on the mount Tabor so many months, I was surely in a place of safety. But, oh! I am well convinced it was a slippery place. Indeed I have not a wish to be placed there again. And, when I have perused the letters you sent me at that time, I am astonished they did not bring me down. But God had appointed the instrument that was
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to effect that. I may well say that it is owing to my having obtained help of God that I continue to this moment. I believe I shall never be finally left; he will put me in a thousand fires before he will suffer me to get from under his hand. I must tell you, that the subject of one part of your letter was entirely new to me, which is the latter rain at death. I thank you kindly for it. I believe the hand of God is in it, as it hath taken, in a great measure, a burden off my mind, which has been a matter of great perplexity, and which I never did communicate to any one; and that is with respect to the temporal death of the body. You cannot conceive the distressing fears I have lived in on account of this thing; how I should be in the pains of death; and fearing the assaults of Satan; and lest I should be, at that time, bereft of my senses, and so be left to dishonour God by speaking unadvisedly with my lips. And this has distressed my mind much. But those fears have not in the least abated since the sting of death has been taken away. Satan has, at times, been permitted to suggest to me, in times of desertion, that, if the work was genuine, those fears would not exist in my mind. But I cannot express what a sensible relief I felt when I read that part of your letter. I hope it will not return again. I know it is very dishonouring to God. If you should find your mind at liberty to enlarge on the subject, I shall take it as a favour; for the subject is
much

much on my mind. I hope the Lord is confirming your bodily health, that you may not be confined from your labours. Mr. H — much wishes he could write to you, but says he is so dead and stupid it is out of his power ; but thanks you for your letters, and shall be always glad to hear from you, begging an interest in your prayers. I remain

Your very affectionate friend

and sister in the Lord Jesus,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

L E T T E R XXXII.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

BELoved sister in the Lord Jesus, and fellow-traveller in the path of tribulation, grace and peace be multiplied. Your kind epistle came safe to hand ; and I thank you for your love in the Lord, and the respect you have shewn to me as a poor servant of his. Am at present better in

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bodily

bodily health than I have been for some time past. Every visit from him, every refreshing from his presence, and every time the old tabernacle totters, I am looking out for the greatest work that was ever done on the soul of a sinner. And would you know what it is? take it then. The promise of this great work runs thus: "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come to us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea vi. 1—3. Here is Christ, and we in him; "Come, let us return unto the Lord." This is in the Covenant Head; for he it is that engaged his heart to approach unto God, to appear in his presence for us, Jer. xxx. 21.

"He hath torn, and he will heal us." This is the chastisement of Christ, which procured our peace, and by whose stripes we are healed.

"He hath smitten, and he will bind us up," &c. For our transgressions was he smitten; and to bind up the broken-hearted is the blessed cause of this smiting.

"After two days will he revive us."—"Christ
 7 died,

died, rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living," Rom. xiv. 9.

"In the third day he will raise us up."—"With my dead body shall they arise."—"Christ died, according to the scriptures, and was buried; and he rose again the third day according to the scriptures," 1 Cor. xv. 4. I know of no scripture which predicts his resurrection on the third day but this, and Jonah's resurrection from the fish's belly.

"And we shall live in his sight."—"He hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us fit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 6.

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord."—"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him," John xiv. 21.

"His going forth is prepared as the morning." He is the bright and morning star which first dawns upon us; the day-spring from on high that visits us; and the sun of righteousness which warms us, and conveys healing to us.

"And he shall come unto us as the rain; as the latter and former rain upon the earth." At conversion he comes down (by his Spirit) as showers upon the mown grass, and as rain that waters the earth. This is saving us by the washing

of regeneration, and renewing us by the Holy Ghost. And a wondrous work this is, when all the guilt and filth which we have contracted is done away, and not so much as a spot or stain appears; and at which time such a glorious crop, called the first fruits of the Spirit (I mean faith, hope, love, joy, peace, praise, life, and righteousness), spring up together, and send forth their sweet fragrance. When the beloved comes into his garden, and eats his pleasant fruits, this work is a most glorious work. But, as sure as the glory of the latter temple exceeded the glory of the former, so sure shall the latter rain produce a more glorious crop than the former; for what wretched roots, that bear hemlock, gall, and wormwood, still remain in the new-born soul! and what access the old fountain of all evil, subtilty, and mischief, hath to his old allies in every believing heart! Who but one could ever say, "When the prince of this world cometh, he hath nothing in me?" Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Canaanites and hornets are both in God's husbandry, though we are sojourners and dwellers with him. But the righteous have bands in their death; and these are the last fetters that shall ever gall a prisoner of hope; for love is strong as death. And, when charity, which never fails, shall do her last good office in this world, the latter rain comes down, and with its irresistible

power beats down and beats out every root and fibre of the old man, and purges out for ever every scarlet and crimson stain of sin, and leaves not so much behind as even the memory of it, then shall faith rise in fight, hope in full enjoyment, and love in her sevenfold heat. And then, but never till then, shall be brought to pass this saying, "And in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts." Zech. xiv. 21. To attain to this, we have apprehended Christ, or rather are apprehended of him. This is that which concerns us, and God will perfect it; for he will not leave us until he hath done the thing that he hath spoken to us of: "To your old age I am he; I will bear, I will carry, and will deliver you." But we must be patient for this coming of the Lord. The husbandman waits till he receives the early and latter rain. Thus far, my dear sister, I have enlarged on this subject according to your request.

The daily cross is intended to counteract the devices of Satan, the workings of the old man, and the pleasing desires of the flesh. But, for my part, this is not all that I expect in the course of my pilgrimage. No; I expect some familiar visits, fresh love-tokens, and confirming renewals, and promised revivals, of the good work, even to the end of my race; for so it is written, "He shall confirm you unto the end." 1 Cor. i. 8.

There is a fault, which originates in our igno-

rance, and is common to all young believers ; and that is, limiting the Holy One of Israel, or confining or restraining the Holy Spirit of God to one operation, and that is, his influence of love in cherishing and comforting the soul. While these consolations last the poor believer thinks all is right, and that the Spirit, as the promised comforter, is upon him, and that he is born again, that his interest is clear, and his state is good ; but, when these subside, all is suspected and called into question, and the worst conclusions are often drawn ; and some, as far as they could, have cast away their confidence, and given all up for lost. And in this way Israel of old, and we as well as they, have often dishonoured, yea, rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit, Isa. lxiii. 10. Now let my dear sister observe and consider the following remarks. We are told that “ prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter i. 21. This speaking as they were moved doth not signify that they spake what they saw, for they spake many things which they never saw : “ Many prophets have desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them.” Matt. xiii. 16, 17. Speaking as they were moved means, that they spake under the impulse and impression which they felt : “ The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,” Gen. i. 2 ; and “ the Spirit of God moved Samson in the camp

camp of Dan," Judges xiii. 25. And we know that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy; that, as there were diversities of motions by the Spirit upon the prophets under the Old Testament, so there are diversities of operations upon the souls of believers under the New; not only diversities of gifts by the Spirit, but of influences. So it follows, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." 1 Cor. xii. 6. The prophet Jeremiah was to take the wine cup of God's fury at God's hand, and to cause all nations to drink it. The Spirit moved him with the just indignation of God. His was truly the burden of the word of the Lord; for most of his prophecies contained heavy judgments. Under this motion of the Spirit the imprecations on the wicked, which so often occur in the Psalms, were penned.

Elijah was moved with the jealousy of God against idolatry, and with power to oppose it, and with a flaming zeal for God's honour. Hence we read so much of the spirit and power of Elias, and of his zeal for the Lord God of Hosts.

Sometimes the Spirit moved them with the influences of divine wrath. Under this motion the prophet Elisha cursed the forty and two children which were devoured by bears; and under the

same influence Gehazi went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

Sometimes they were moved with the pity and compassion of the Lord. Under these motions the kind invitations, encouragements, and those pathetic commiserations, so often to be met with in the Psalms, were written.

Sometimes they were moved with the eternal love of God, a sense of his presence, and comfortable communion and fellowship with him. And under this influence Solomon wrote his love song upon Christ and his church.

Influenced with the bowels of God's mercy, the prophet Isaiah set forth and painted the dolorous sufferings of Christ. Moved with the faithfulness and immutability, the prophets have advanced and enforced the firmness of God's decrees, the stability of his covenant, and the certainty of the eternal salvation of all the elect of God. Thus it appears plain that there were diversities of motions by the Spirit of God upon the prophets; and there are also diversities of operations upon all believers. Every grace is of the Holy Spirit's planting; and he is the life of every grace; and the exercise of every grace depends upon his operation. If this wind blows not, the spices flow not out. Sometimes the Spirit operates wonderfully in strengthening and supporting the believer, by his might in the inward man. "My heart and my flesh fail, but God is the strength
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of my heart, and my portion for ever.”—“ In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.” Psalm cxxxviii. 3. To this agrees the prophet : “ But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.” Micah iii. 8. Again : one of his operations produceth sorrow, which rises from a sense of sin, being grieved at it, and hating ourselves for the commission of it, and mourning after God, and after forgiveness and reconciliation with him ; which sorrow is drawn forth by discoveries of his goodness, and stirred up by the Holy Spirit, who testifies of Christ to us, and who produceth this godly sorrow, which terminates in repentance. Under this operation Hannah endured her affliction of barrenness and persecution ; and under the same she went to Shiloh.

Another of his operations is often felt in prayer : when he quickens us to feel our need ; shews us the things that are freely given us of God ; furnishes our mouths with arguments, and our souls with energy, till nothing in heaven or earth can stand before us. This is helping our infirmities, and making intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

As a spirit of faith, he will at times equip the soul with such confidence, that even things impossible to nature are performed without a doubt.

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an if, or a but. Under this operation Sarah received strength to conceive ; and under the same David met the Goliath of Gath.

Almighty faith the promise sees,
And trusts in Christ alone ;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says it shall be done.

Again ; when a child of God is called to endure a great fight of affliction, in order that he may endure them, and not be moved by them, he is wonderfully influenced with meekness and patience. Hence we read so much of the meekness of Moses, and of the patience of Job.

In defending and protecting the believer against the cunning craftiness of those heretics which circulate damnable heresies, the Spirit's power is not a little seen in setting truth before their eyes, and in applying it with power to the heart, so as to render it impossible for the most subtle seducer to seduce a chosen vessel. Thus he guides us into all truth, and is called " the spirit of a sound mind."

Nor are his influences less upon an awakened sinner, whom, as a spirit of life, he quickens to feel every sin brought to his mind and memory, and the guilt of them ; yea, he makes his sensations so keen, that the wrath, the frowns, rebukes, and reproofs, of God are all felt and feared ; yea, every word of truth that militates against him is felt,

felt, and the poor sinner trembles at it; and wonderfully is such a poor creature supported under the weight of guilt and wrath that lies on him, and the fore buffetings and accusations of Satan, though it is imperceptible to him. But sure I am that no soul, without almighty power and momentary support, can stand upon this ground; black despair, or wild destruction, must ensue. But as our day is so shall our strength be.

The same Spirit that convinces us of our sin supports us under our convictions.

Another of his operations is that of a comforter; which comfort is produced by believing views of Christ, and of our interest in him; by shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts; by helping our infirmities in prayer; by applying the blood and righteousness of Christ to us; by witnessing our adoption; and by applying promise upon promise to our souls, while we suck those choice breasts of consolation, milk out and are delighted with the abundance of Zion's glory, and by giving us the first fruits, powers, earnest, pledges, and foretastes, of the world to come; which are streams from the river of divine pleasure flowing from the fountain of life, and are intended to make glad the city of God, the sacred places of the tabernacles of the Most High.

As a spirit of revelation he leads us into the mysteries of the kingdom, and into the secret counsels and purposes of God, into his decrees
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and covenants, and gives us bright views of the ancient settlements of eternity, and of the glorious and rich displays of grace ; and leads us to see a blessed harmony in the doctrines of the gospel, and produces harmony in our mind and judgment ; and a most sweet peace and tranquillity of soul follow upon these things. An earnest desire to establish thee is the cause of my leading thy mind through the above operations.

As to myself, my heart has long sunk and rose with my country. I view Old England as the seat of the church of the living God, and the valley of vision, Isa. xxii. 1. And, because of the house of the Lord my God, I will seek my country's good. Every time that I hear of any success attending the French I find uncommon energy in prayer against them ; and every time they are defeated my soul pours forth her gratitude to my God. In all the circle of my acquaintance, whether in town or country, I do not know one child of God, who really knows his own heart, and the great Physician, but what has an earnest desire, a prayer, and a cry, in his heart to God against that base nation. And who furnishes us with these desires and prayers ? That God that will fulfil our desires, and grant the request of our lips ; for sure I am that the Spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God, but never contrary to it. I believe I have some knowledge of about thirty persons who, in their simplicity,
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have inadvertently sucked in the venom of Tom Paine; and nothing but barrenness, confusion, guilt, and bondage, followed them. But, as soon as God led me to shew his mind and will concerning it, they fell before it; and, by the furnace of affliction and humbling grace, they brought it up, and returned to their rest. But some few that I know have drunk deep into it; and these, like the house of Eli, will not be easily purged, either by sacrifice or offering. They are too wise to be instructed, and too strong to be brought down to submit to the word of truth. No private prayer, nor public warning, hath any effect upon them. And this hath made them manifest to me, and to many more. And I believe in my heart that their wisdom will terminate in their own destruction, because "they have not hearkened to my counsel," 2 Chron. xxv. 16. God will destroy the fat and the strong; he will feed them with judgment, Ezek. xxxiv. 16. And I know of no professors so strong, in the worst sense, as those which faithful reproof cannot pull down. But my God will never look to, nor dwell with, any but those who are of an humble and a contrite spirit, and who tremble at his word. An awful proof of this hath lately been discovered. A man who resided not far from the chapel, and who had attended me for some time diligently, and appeared to be a reformed man, and began to call upon God, and kept up prayer in his family, and, as Paul says of the Galatians, seemed to run well, but Satan hindered him,

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by conveying the sentiments of Tom Paine to his mind ; at which time he became a sworn enemy to government, and of course associated with those who could strengthen his hands in rebellion. Nevertheless he did not leave the chapel, nor drop prayer in his family. And, though I was often led to bear my testimony against that infernal spirit, yet he stood his ground ; he obeyed not the voice of his teacher, nor was he to be fed with that part of God's wholesome word which tells every soul to be subject to the higher powers. But it was not long before God fed him with judgment ; for when I preached the " Watch-word and Warning " he was there ; and God sent it home to his heart, and down he went ; and when he got home he told his wife that he was a damned man, and that he was in the state that I had described ; and from that time he left off praying. Soon after this he got up to Kensington palace ; and there he cursed and blasted the king, and told the people that he was king. Some of the military, hearing of this, took him into custody ; but, perceiving him out of his mind, they dismissed him. Thus he began with that doctrine that holds up the majesty of the people ; and, when given up to the devil, he proclaimed himself a king. But, if we are obedient unto death, we shall be more ; for " he hath made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign for ever and ever. " Adieu.

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I HAVE received your epistle, for which I feel more thanks in my heart than I have words to express. I believe I shall ever remain the greatest debtor you have; and I am sure I shall never be able to pay one mite towards it. But I know the Lord will return you fourfold; because he has said, "Whatsoever ye have done unto one of these my little ones, ye have done it unto me." You have never yet denied me any one request I have made; the consideration of which emboldens me to come to you again with some difficulty which I have upon my mind. I told you, in my last, that what you mentioned in your former letter of the latter rain which was to come down on the believer at death, had, in some measure, released my mind from some fears which I have been long harassed with. I thank you for enlarging on the subject. Indeed, the matter lay with much weight on my mind. You mention this passage, viz. that "the righteous have bands in their death;" and that these shall be the last fetters that shall be broken. I am in the dark
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what these bands are; but it seems they are to snap at a dying hour. But yet you call the work that is to be done on the soul at that time the greatest work of all. Is it not strange, then, that my mind should be again brought into bondage under the fear of death? You told me, in a former letter, that we were travelling in the same path; but, indeed, I think it is otherwise now. But you must judge when I give you an account of my present feelings. And one thing in your letter confirms me in it, viz. where you say that the daily cross, which is intended to counteract the devices of Satan, the workings of the old man, and the pleasing desires of the flesh, is not all you expect in the course of your pilgrimage; but that you expect some familiar visits, fresh love-tokens, confirming renewals, and promised revivals, of the good work of God, even unto the end. This is the place I seem to turn out of your path; and, indeed, I have at present no such things in expectation. And it seems to me that I am confirmed in this by the word of God. The passage I refer to is recorded in Ezekiel: "But, when the people of the land shall come before the Lord in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth in by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate; he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against

againſt it." Ezek. xlv. 9. The latter part of this verſe ſeems to comprehend my *paſt experience*, my *preſent feelings*, and my *future path*, and has involved my mind in much darkneſs and gloomineſs; and I am led to believe that I am more intereſted in the myſtical ſenſe of this paſſage than any one upon earth. And it is this text that has cut off all my expectations of future enlargement while in this world; which is alſo confirmed to me by what Mr. Hart ſays in one of his hymns :

Their pardon ſome receive at firſt,
And then, compell'd to fight,
They find their latter ſtages worſt,
And travel much by night.

The above paſſage in Ezekiel has been on my mind for this twelvemonth paſt, and I have thought that there has been a great depth in the words; but they never brought any difficulty on my mind till about a month ago, when it forcibly ſtruck me that I was ſo much concerned in them; and I have alſo many things to confirm me in it. You have told me, and ſo have others, that the Lord has dealt with me in a ſingular manner, both with reſpect to the degree and duration of thoſe ſpiritual joys and conſolations which I have been favoured with in times paſt. And what inference can be drawn from it but that which is meant by coming in by the ſouth gate, and that I

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am no more to return by the way of the gate whereby I came in, but I am to go forth by the way of the north gate? And I believe the north and south gate mean the same operations as the north and south wind. Will you grant me this request also, that is, to give me your thoughts on the passage. I do assure you it is not a matter of curiosity. I do believe you will sympathize with me, and feel for me, and pray for me. This seems to be the sharpest trial I have lately had; though, blessed be the Lord, I feel no shakings nor unsealings respecting my state. But I have at present no light on my path; and, to my dark understanding, that text has made a discord in the word of God, and seems to clash with such passages as this, "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" and this also, "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up on wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint." But, instead of this, my expectations are of more darkness, sharper trials, being perpetually under the hiding of God's face; and, indeed, I am already in the dark path. God says, in his word, that he will abundantly bless the provisions of his house, and that he will satisfy his poor with bread; that his priests shall be clothed with salvation, and his saints shall shout aloud for joy. But, instead of this, I have lately been very barren under the word.

word. I have seen the provision blessed to others, but nothing under the priest's hands for me. He has been clothed with salvation, and the food has been so blessed to others, that I have seen them shout aloud for joy, while I have hung down my head like a bulrush. God says, that those who are planted in his house shall flourish in his courts; that they shall be fat and flourishing: instead of this, I am crying out, "My leanness, my leanness! wo unto me!" though there is no famine of the word, but bread enough and to spare. But I know I have procured all this to myself by my pride, and by that folly that is bound up in my heart; and there it is like to remain, unless the rod of correction drives it out. I think the prophet Isaiah speaks also of this darkness that I feel, where he says, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" and then he enjoins the hardest work of all, when he says, "Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God," because he mentions *his* God. I infer, therefore, that he means the darkness that I am in; because, through all, I have not been led to cast away my confidence; because I think that this trial comes from God himself, for I cannot see that Satan has any hand in it; so it must be God, I think, that laid that passage with such a weight on my mind. But perhaps, when you read this, you will see for me,

as you have done oft times before. You tell me you have an earnest desire to establish me; and this last epistle is not less precious to me than the former; and indeed I do feel my love to you in the Lord increasing in whatever frame I am; and I firmly believe you are to be the instrument of confirming the work that God has done upon my soul by the ministry of my dear father in Christ. I have some things on my mind that, were it expedient, I would communicate to you; but there is at present a lion in the way. I have had many pros and cons on my mind since I received your last whether I should write to you or not. But I believe you are to know all my heart. May the Lord give you something for me that shall bring my mind forth from out of these dark regions; for I seem held fast where I am, and that with a strong hand. I know there hath been many things which you have predicted to me that I could not believe till they came to pass. But true it is that not one word that you have spoken to me has fell to the ground; nor have I found you a false prophet in any of your predictions. I was glad to hear you was better in bodily health. We shall be glad to see you in our parts again; and believe me to remain, as much as ever,

Your affectionate friend, but

unworthy sister in the Lord,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIV.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

YOUR last is now before me ; and I have just as much right to thank you for it, as you have to thank me for mine ; for, if any thing from me may cast a ray of light on thy mind, or on thy path, I am often rewarded in answering thine by some fresh thoughts, or new discoveries, which are often attended with devotional sensations, which melt my soul down, and draw out my gratitude to the best of all friends.

“ The wicked have no bands in their death, their strength is firm.” But remember, it is *their* strength. Satan, who blinds their eyes, and keeps their conscience asleep, is the strong man armed, that fortifies their carnal mind, and supports their false confidence and vain hope, even when launching forth into the bottomless pit. These, our Lord tells us, “ lift up their eyes in hell,” and never before. But we, my dear sister, are planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, as well as in the likeness of his resurrection, and must indeed drink of the cup that he drank of. And it is well known that he had bands in his death ; for

Christ was a bond-servant under the law; as appears by the thirty pieces of silver which he was sold for; which was the price to be paid (according to the law) to the owner of a bond-servant which had been gored to death by the horns of a beast. Read and compare Exod. xxi. chap. with Psalm xxii. and Zech. xi. 12. The Saviour's worst bands were our sins, his Father's wrath, and the powers of darkness. When the prince of this world came to him to bruise his heel, these deep waters entered his soul, Psalm lxxix. 1; besides the insults of the Jews, and the excruciating pains of his body. But all these pains of death were loosed, because "it was not possible that he should be holden of it." Acts ii. 24. Our worst bands are the corruptions of our heart, the law in our members, and inbred sin that works in us, and will work in us as long as we live. These often make us halt, faint, and stumble, and often betray us into a spirit of legal bondage, and procure us many chastisements, many spiritual desertions, and much fatherly anger. And these sensible suspensions of divine favour, frowns, stripes, and bondage, when sanctified, are intended to purge the branch, that it may bring forth more fruit. Not a few of these purging draughts have fallen to thy share already in the short course of thy pilgrimage; and when humbling grace operates, how are our sinful stirrings subdued, how are they detested, and for a while out of sight, when sweet

love, meekness, contrition, godly sorrow, self-
 abhorrence, unfeigned faith and abounding hope,
 much peace and divine tranquillity, all appear up-
 permost in the soul, and make it look like a bride
 adorned with her jewels. This, my dear sister, is
 what I mean by bands in the saints' death.. These
 corruptions will stick by us to the last, and Satan
 often works sadly in them and by them ; and it is
 generally seen, though not always, that the child
 of God, on his death-bed, is not a little exercised
 with them ; as it will be even with the wise vir-
 gins when the midnight cry comes. An alarm
 will go forth ; then they will arise and examine
 themselves, and there will be a little purging work
 go on upon them ; some sharp reproofs, some
 melting and humbling trials ; and then a restoring
 of them to the joys of the Lord's salvation. Trim-
 ming of lamps consists in wiping them out, cut-
 ting off the burnt snuffs, pouring in fresh oil, and
 lighting them up, that the light of the righteous
 may rejoice when the lamp of the wicked is put
 out. But the creature, the new creature, the
 whole mystical body of Christ, shall be delivered
 from the bondage of corruption, and be brought
 into the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; for
 this is the earnest expectation of every new crea-
 ture in Christ Jesus. For this creature was made
 subject to vanity, or death (Gen. iii. 19. Eccl. iii.
 19, 20) ; not willingly, for death is not desirable
 in itself ; but God hath subjected us to it in hope,

that our souls may be delivered from all corruption at our departure out of this world ; that we may have hope of glory in death, and leave the body to rest behind us, in hope of a glorious resurrection, which will be the last work of hope in this world. Thus we must hope to the end, and no longer ; for what a man seeth himself in full possession of why doth he yet hope for ?

But because I told you, in my last, that “ I expected some familiar visits, love-tokens, confirming renewals, and promised revivals, in the course of my pilgrimage, even to the end, as well as a daily cross,” I have staggered you ; and, in the expectation of these things, you say you seem to turn out of my path. No, no, my sister ; I ran to the same extremes that you do. When in my first love I said, and believed it too, that I should never be moved from the mount, the Lord of his goodness had made my hill so strong ; but, when spiritual desertions came on, and Satan returned with double rage, and every inherent corruption was stirred up, attended with legal bondage and slavish fear, I then concluded, as Job did, “ my days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent without hope ; O remember that my life is wind, mine eye shall no more see good !” Job vii. 6, 7. David was wrong in his exultation, for God hid his face from him. Job was wrong also in his lamentation, for the Lord appeared to him clearer than ever he did before. I was wrong
also,

also, for I have had hundreds of visits since I drew those sad conclusions; and you are wrong, for he will revive and renew his work on thy soul, and bring it to light, and confirm you in it again and again: " They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, and spread forth their roots like Lebanon." If they revive, there must be more life; if they grow, there must be more grace given; and, if they spread forth their roots, their love must be drawn forth, for we are to be rooted and grounded in love; and, if we are to root like Lebanon, we must be strengthened, established, and settled, this way. But you inform me that you have no such expectations, and that you are confirmed in your opinion by the word of the Lord itself. The passage you allude to in Ezek. xlv. 9, you do not rightly understand. That the temple spoken of in that chapter was a type of the church of God under the New Testament is plain, for the church bears the same name; and that all the furniture of the temple, in its gospel signification, is now found in gospel Zion, cannot be denied; and that there are such things as north and south winds, which blow on the Lord's garden, I hinted to you in a former epistle; and likewise I mentioned Solomon's trees, which he represents as falling toward the north and toward the south, and of their unalterable state after they are fallen; and no doubt but the north and south gates that you allude to have the same signification.

signification. Suppose a poor finner is seized with a spirit of bondage to fear, and wrath and guilt work in him till his soul is chilled, and he filled with fear and trembling : this is the north wind, the spirit of bondage, which is the wrath of God. But at length he is enabled to fly from wrath to come, and to embrace the hope set before him ; and he exercises faith on the Saviour, and comes sensibly into his favour, into his grace, and into his finished salvation. He then passes from death to life, and shall never more come into condemnation. He enters by the north gate. Christ to him is the gate of life, and the end of the law for righteousness. His faith now works by love ; and, as loving-kindness is never to be taken from him, he shall go out at the south gate. But then, what is or can be meant by going out of the church ? Why, in one sense, the believer can never go out at all ; for “ he that overcometh is made a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go no more out.” Going out, therefore, can mean nothing but a being translated from the militant to the triumphant church by death. Moreover, suppose a person, at his first setting off in a profession, is allured and drawn into it by a sense of God’s goodness, and a believing view of his kind providence, as Hezekiah was, and as Job seems to be, and the north wind, or a spirit of bondage, falls upon him, as it did upon those two men, that they might see the hand-writing that was against them,

them, and that they might know the sin of their heart by the application of the law ; this alters not the state of their souls ; they were members of Christ before, so they were when in their troubles, and they were more sure of this when their deliverance came. It remains, therefore, that it cannot, in the worst sense, mean a real believer ; for, though he may be exercised in his pilgrimage, and on his death-bed, with legal bondage, yet he cannot go out of the church, and out of the world, under the wrath of God, nor yet in bondage ; his end must be peace, not wrath. The covenant, the oath of God, the promise of life, the death of Christ, and the Spirit's work, all forbid this. To conclude this subject, in the strictest and worst sense of the words, the comer-in at the south gate is the *way-side hearer*, who has his natural affections and passions stirred up ; in whom light, joy, gifts, and zeal, spring up ; and who, in time of temptation and persecution, falls away, and goes out of the church, and into the world, and then out of the world under the wrath and curse of God. And this character is further described by this prophet in the 16th verse of this same chapter ; and Christ, in his days, quotes the words, and applies them : “ Thus saith the Lord God, If the prince give a gift to any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons ; it shall be their possession by inheritance.” Ezek. xlv. 16. This inheritance is eternal life ; and Christ came
that

that we might have it ; and he that hath it, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance ; for Christ came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. “ But, if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty ; after it shall return to the prince.” Ezek. xlv. 17. Our Saviour’s explanation and application of this text is, “ Take the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents ; for he that hath not (hath not life, but a spiritual gift), it shall be taken away from him, even that which he hath.” And it is often seen that a servant cuts a most glaring figure in the church of God, until the spirit of love and liberty be poured forth upon some of the elect of God about him ; and, when he sees this, he sinks in his soul at the sight, and at the light, and hates it, as Saul did, when he saw that God was with David. Such an one sinks in the esteem of such heaven-born souls as much as Saul did in the eyes of Samuel, when he said, “ Honour me now before the elders of my people.” Nothing discovers a false profession, and a false professor, like the spirit of love and liberty being poured out upon poor broken-hearted sinners about him ; and, if it come upon such as have looked up to him as something great, discriminating grace discovers him. At this he is offended, and hates the light, and flees from it, and fights against it ; and this withers his joys, it
blasts

blasts his zeal and diligence, and dries up the glee of his animal spirits, and natural abilities too ; so that his gifts return to the prince, and he gives the talent to others. He that receives this gift is a servant, and he comes in at the south gate. He begins his profession with having his passions moved, and his natural affections stirred up, and comes in at the south gate ; and, when the jubilee comes, he either takes offence at it, or else, in persecution and temptation, falls away, and legal bondage seizes him, and he goes back to the first husband, the law, never being divorced from it : and this is going out at the north gate. And, when death cuts such a corrupt tree down, the tree falls toward the north ; and where the tree falls there it shall lie. But the name and title of the other is that of a son ; and his inheritance shall not be taken from him, nor shall he go out of the church but by death : he came in by the north gate. A spirit of bondage, sooner or later, more or less, doth exercise all the elect of God ; till love casts their fears out : such come in by the north gate, and shall go out by the south. Death cuts that tree of righteousness down, and it falls toward the south ; and in the place where it falls there it shall lie.

I must confess that I rather wonder at your giving up all expectations of sensible visits from God by the way, only from your constructions put upon that dark and ambiguous text ; “ An
 enemy

enemy hath done this." God will never apply any passage of his word in a sense that shall run counter to the whole current of scripture. " I am with you alway to the world's end. I will water them every moment. I will keep them night and day. Their leaf shall be green; nor shall they cease from yielding fruit." And sure I am that heaven and earth shall pass away before a jot or tittle of his word shall fail. And as sure as temptations, desertions, legal bondage, or unbelief, obscure the good work on thy heart, so sure will God shine upon it, revive it, and bring it forth to light again; being confident of this very thing, that he, which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, when it shall be perfected, both in body and soul. In this confidence, and in the best of bonds, I remain

Yours to serve for his sake,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXXV.

To NOCTUA AURITA, of the Desert.

I HAVE received your letter, which came to me wet with the dew of heaven; and therefore I must call it Gideon's fleece, when it was taken out of the floor wet. I hope you will excuse my coming to you so soon; but really I could stay no longer. By your letter my mind is entirely delivered from that darkness which has entangled me for these three months past, respecting the coming in by the south gate, and going forth by the north, &c. I believe Satan never had before such a simple fool to deal with. I perceive he is the enemy that has done me all this mischief; but he is now discovered. I know it was he that applied that passage to my mind, and made me believe that it was left on record on purpose for me, and could be applicable to no one's case but mine. I can see now, as clear as I can see the sun at noon day, when he entered first, and the ends he had in view; and, by my relating to you the exercises I have passed under since I wrote you that letter, I think you will see it too. You know he had then gained his point so far as to cut off
all

all my expectations of being favoured with any more revivings, renewings, or sensible manifestations of the Lord's love and favour towards me while in this world; and he brought the word of God to prove it, which was, that I was to go out by the north gate: therefore there was nothing but gloominess and darkness felt by me. This caused my hands to hang down, and my knees to wax feeble, and nothing was expected by me but more darkness and misery; and this did come to pass, for I got deeper and deeper in distress and darkness. This confirmed me yet more that it was God himself that had laid that passage with such a weight on my mind. This strengthened my bands, and made them still tighter; and, after three or four weeks had passed, and I had received no answer from you to my letter, he came to me thus, and insinuated that I was not on your heart and in your affections as formerly; and that God had taken me off, and that he would not suffer you to send me a word more, nor even to pray for me; and then set before me what a curse that soul must be under that was not on the heart of the servants of the Lord, because he says that whatsoever they bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; though I know I did never wholly credit this lie of his; but it was but one thing that kept me from it, and that was this, I thought God would not take me
off

off the heart of one of his servants without taking me off the heart of the other ; and with respect to that being the case with my dear pastor, the King's herald, Satan was not permitted to assault me with, for I had had proof enough of late that I was more on his heart than ever ; and I had not a doubt on my mind but he did pray for me.

O, blessed be the Lord that he can go no further than he is permitted ! Satan proceeded against me with great caution, lest he should be discovered. He was slow, but sure to deceive so far ; but he had not got to the length of his chain yet. About a fortnight ago he came to me in a vision of the night. I dreamed I was in a barn-floor, and had got a halter about my neck to hang myself, but was prevented. However, soon after I found the halter round my neck the second time, in a hitch knot, fastened to a beam above my head, and myself standing some considerable height from the ground ; and I was just stretching forth my hands to give myself a swing off the place, when I instantly awoke, in such horror, and in such darkness, as it is impossible for me to describe, and with a conviction on my mind that the dream was a prediction of the awful end I should make, and that this was what was meant by going out by the north gate. Every thing was hid from my sight that God had done for my soul ; the bed could not contain me long ; and in this situation and conflict I was four days and nights.

This surely must be what David meant when he said the pains of hell got hold of him; for sure I am that my feelings were similar to what the damned in hell feel. Here I let go my hold of the Rock, and so I lay exposed to all the shafts of Satan; and this was his hour, and the powers of darkness; for there was nothing to resist him, for I had not one piece of that armour that God has provided in exercise; and sure I am that, if my safety had depended on my hold of the Rock, I had sunk to rise no more. But the Rock held me, and followed me through this dark path. The third day I could write a few lines to his excellency, and he sent me a letter; and God did give him a word for me which did in a measure abate the violence of the temptation. He told me it was Satan, and I was helped in a measure to believe it; and I felt a calmness in my mind, and these words afforded some consolation to me, namely, the conversation between John and the angel in the Revelation, where he says, "Who are these, and whence came they?" and the angel's reply, "These are they who are come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God." I saw much in this word *therefore*; by it I clearer than ever saw that there was no getting to heaven but through a rough path; and these words of James added something to the calm on my mind,

"Blessed

“ Blessed is he that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life.” And I know that I had been made to endure this conflict, and also who had supported me through it. But Satan was not fully discovered till I received your letter; and, when I had read it twice, I said with David, “ Though an host encamp against me, I will not fear; though war rise up against me, in this will I be confident, for God is with me of a truth.” And sure I am that all that Satan has told me about not being on your heart as aforetime, is a lie. And the Lord has been pleased to set his broad seal to the contents of your letter, that my mind might be, if possible, more than fully satisfied that it came from him, and that you gave me the mind of the Spirit; for, on reading the xlviith of Ezekiel after perusing your letter, and after reading the 10th verse, which says, “ And the prince in the midst of them when they go in shall go in, and when they go forth shall go forth;” to think Satan should hold me in such darkness so long quite astonished me, when that one verse is quite sufficient to prove all the interpretations that he had put on the verse before to be nothing but lies. After I had communicated the dream and the conflict to his Majesty’s herald, I had concluded never to rehearse it again; but the light that accompanied your letter to me made me alter my mind, for I thought you would see more of the

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work of Satan and his craft than I could. May the Lord bless you with the blessings of the upper and nether springs, and abundantly reward all your labours of love to my soul ! This is, and ever will be, the prayer (when privileged with access to God) of

Your very sincere and affectionate sister

in the bonds of the gospel,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

P. S. My partner unites with me in kind love. We should be very glad to see you at our cottage this summer ; and the poor Shunamite will be very glad to accommodate you with a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

Yours came safe to hand; in which you intimate that the snare of the fowler is, in some measure, broken. Satan can quote and apply scripture when it will serve his own turn; but he is never divided against himself in that work.

As the angels were the first creatures that God made, and are called the morning stars, and sons of God, who sung their anthem together, and shouted for joy at the creation of the world, Job xxxviii. 7; so I have no doubt but they were present when God gave the law to Adam, as they were also at the giving it to Israel at Sinai, Heb. ii. 2. 'And this appears plain by Satan (after his fall from heaven) quoting the word of God in his first attempt to deceive Eve: "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" He used the same art in his tempting Christ to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple: "It is written," saith Satan, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up." Matt. iv. 6,

In this way Satan labours to discourage every broken-hearted sinner whom the Lord hath awakened, quickened, and wounded ; I mean, by quoting and applying the most terrible texts of scripture to them, which he does to obstruct our way to Christ, to dishearten us, to sink us in despair, and to stop the mouth of prayer, and to stir up hard thoughts of Christ ; and some of the most alarming passages in the Bible are thrown as stumbling-blocks in our way, and we stumble upon the dark mountains of Sinai, and stumble at election, and at reprobation, Zech. vi. 1. Heb. xii. 18. In this way he harassed me, by bringing continually to my mind the unpardonable sin, or sin unto death ; and that of Esau's finding no place of repentance, though he sought it with tears ; the deplorable state of Saul, when God answered him no more ; that also of man giving an account at the day of judgment for every idle word ; and the soul that sins shall die : all these, and many more of the like import, were perpetually brought to my mind with forcible suggestions that I was the man ; and that God had sent me into the world, as he did Pharaoh, to shew his wrath and power in me. These, and many more, were brought hourly to me, and set before me as my sorrowful meat. And who applied them to me ? not God ; for, if he had, they must all have been fulfilled ; for whatever God says, whether against us or for us, shall most surely come to pass.

But

But none of these came to pass with me in the way that Satan predicted they would.

But, on the other hand, every promise that God sent to me stood fast. The first word that ever came to me from him was, "Believe that I am in you, and you in me;" and that moment everlasting light shone into my soul, to shew me where I was; and there it is to this day.

The next was, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." God did enable me to overcome in that dreadful temptation; and I believe to this day that God hath called me that I might receive the reward of eternal inheritance.

The next was, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And at that time righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, filled my heart.

Being once much concerned in my mind about the state of many poor quiet people who did not run to the same excess of riot as many do, I asked the Lord what would become of them, and he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Being at another time brought into bondage by disputing with an old Arminian, and being sadly tossed in my mind between free will and free grace, and some passages of scripture which seem to favour both, the Lord spoke to me thus, "Do not the scriptures say that no man can come to me except the Father draw him?" I answered, I

know they say so. Then it came again, saying, " If you can find a place where it says that a man can come without being drawn, then you may prove the Bible lies;" and away went all my confusion and bondage, and sweet tranquillity followed. From that moment Arminianism kicked the beam, nor did it ever stagger me afterwards; and I am at a point that none but the devil is the author of that system.

When I carried coals, a person came into the neighbourhood, and took a room for an Oxford Blue to preach in. A voice told me that that room was opened for me. When the man came to speak his mouth was stopped, and I was invited to speak there, which I afterwards did for some years.

One Sunday morning, going out to hear a minister that was to preach out of doors, a voice came to me saying, " You must preach out of doors to-day;" and it told me what text I was to speak from also; and the minister that was expected disappointed the people, for he came not; so they constrained me to speak, which I did all that summer, and the summer following.

Being once in great distress and want, these words were spoken to my heart, " I know thy tribulation, and poverty; but thou art rich." And I believe, with my whole heart, that the Lord did take notice of my poverty and sufferings, by his kind appearance for me afterwards in providence; and

and that the Lord is the portion of my soul I have no doubt, for he hath redeemed me; and “ the ransom of a man’s life is his riches.” Prov. xiii. 8. When he sent me to London he told me to “ prophesy upon the thick boughs.” And surely none could be more opposed than I have been, by almost every dissenting minister and congregation; besides the oppositions that I have met with from false-hearted friends, from worldlings, from devils, heretics, and hypocrites. And still the boughs are thick, and thick they will be as long as it pleases God to speak by me.

When I had that disturbance in the church, which you know of, God told me, by his Spirit, that he would avenge his own elect. And no small number have got that vengeance lodged in their conscience to this day; besides the many that went out of the world in less than two years after God had discovered the bane of their hearts.

Soon after this, when I was wondering at their hardness of heart, and hearing of their continual calumny, he spoke these words to me, “ When they shall cease to deal treacherously thou shalt deal treacherously with them.” This passage shewed me that they were to fill up their measure this way, and to go on reproaching me till they were weary of it; and that some would then desire to come back again; and that others, in their distress, when the judgments of God overtook

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them,

them, would come to me for my counsel and my prayers; and, further, that I should be a favour of death unto death to them in my ministry, and a witness against them in the day of judgment: the former has come to pass already, and so will the latter.

When Europe appeared in such confusion under the influence of that spirit of rebellion which the devil, by the instrumentality of Tom Paine, poured out upon men, I had long begged of God to shew me what part of his word contained this perilous time, and he told me it was "the hour of temptation," as is related in a sermon lately published by me. And it was explained to me as being the same trial as came upon the Jews in the days of Jeremiah; and that it was sent to try the obedience of professors, and the loyalty of the nations; and I soon perceived that no class of men in this nation were more easily taken, nor more effectually bound in these bonds of iniquity, than the hypocrites in Zion, and impostors in the ministry; and the calamity of both will come suddenly upon them. Thus my dear sister may see that what God speaks and applies comes to pass. But all the fearful predictions which came to me from Satan, in the days of my trouble, fell to the ground. And, as Satan can apply scripture, so can he also work by dreams. All the fearful and miserable dreams which he tormented me with, such as dying by suicide, being thrown into wells,

wells, and down unfathomable precipices, and being burnt alive, and of coming to the worst of ends, and dying innumerable deaths; have none of them, as yet, come to pass; nor do I believe they ever will; whereas the dreams which came from God all came to pass. One which I had in my distress was, I was climbing up the outside of a most spacious fine building, but many enemies opposed me; but I gained the height in spite of them all.

Another was a most furious attack of a dreadful and formidable monster to devour me; but, though he made several attempts, yet he could not come near me by several feet. I wondered at this, and, looking up, saw a beautiful man smiling at me, and holding a chain in his hand, which chain was round the body of the beast, just as a monkey is chained. And I believe the Saviour holds the devil in chains to this day; so that he cannot destroy God's people, though he often tries.

I had another dream, which was that of two innumerable armies drawn up to engage on a very high and spacious plain. I was there to watch their motions, and to bear tidings; and, as soon as they began to engage, off I set over the plain and down into a narrow road, through a low and hollow field: the cannon and muskets roaring as I ran, I thought they might kill me; but, looking towards the plain, I saw a very high

stone wall between me and the plain, and that the plain was level with the top of the wall, and the village to which I bore tidings was in a lane at the bottom of the field in which I was. Soon after this the war broke out; and I have borne tidings throughout this war, and the wall of salvation hath protected both me, and those who have received my tidings, even to this day.

Soon after this I had another dream, which was, that I saw a very high and strong fence, somewhat like posts and rails, but exceeding strong, and the top of it reached to the clouds; on the other side I saw a numerous herd of black bulls, exceeding fierce, and they leaped, many of them, clear over this high fence. When I awoke, I conceived the high fence to be the laws of nations, and the boundaries or frontiers of countries; and, when I heard how the French overran divers nations, and how the disaffected were let loose here among us, I thought of the fat bulls of Bashan, mentioned in the Psalms and other scriptures. Some I saw in my dream could not leap over, and those that did could not destroy the fence, for that stood firm, just as it was. And so I have seen it: the bulwarks of national laws stand as they did; and our disaffected, who tried hard to leap over, could not; and those that did will never leap back again. This my dream came fresh to my mind when I saw in the newspapers that the French commander in Italy informed the
 Directory

Directory of his engagement on the mountains, saying that " his army fought above the clouds."

Thus I have informed my dear sister of the various applications of the most terrible passages of scripture to me in my deepest distress, and of the fearful dreams ; neither of which came to pass, being the work of the devil, to keep me from Christ. And this I was confirmed in by the Lord's visits to me ; for every glimpse that I had of the Saviour dispersed these dismal things ; but, when he withdrew, then they came again. It is with the seeking finner as it was with the lunatic in the gospel, while he was coming to Christ the devil threw him down. Luke ix. 42. Furthermore : not only by fearful dreams and false applications hath Satan distressed me, but even by horrible sensations in the night ; and that even when I have gone to my bed in the most profound peace and tranquillity, without the least sense of any guilt, shyness, or distance, between me and my God ; yea, and sometimes when I have been much favoured with his sensible presence overnight. I have often, in former years, waked up in the dead of the night, and felt that my comforts were all gone, and a most melancholy and dismal gloom hung upon my mind, and such horrors and terrors had succeeded as quite terrified me, and such darkness as might be felt, with a multitude of the most ghastly spectres drawn upon my imagination, with death and the grave represented in their
most

most dreadful forms and awful consequences. These things drove me to examine myself, and to seek the face of the Lord; and, when I found that prayer dispelled them, and the Lord appeared still propitious to me, and that none of these things brought any guilt on my conscience, and that they were not attended with the burden of unpardoned sin, nor with the piercing sensations of unappeased wrath, nor with the curse of the law, nor with the apprehensions of an angry God, nor with any dread of damnation; I concluded that they came from the devil, and the word of God bore me out: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty; such shall not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day." Psalm xc. I was not a little exercised with very foul dreams also, but prayer removed them all; and Satan hath dropped this method of proceeding against me for many years, for he knows that I am, in some measure, up to it.

Now, as Satan thus works against sensible sinners, whose hearts are honest, and who come constantly to the light to have their real state discovered, and who are made willing to take up the cross, to follow Christ, and to be saved by him; I say, as Satan works against these by fearful dreams,

dreams, and applications of the most terrible passages of scripture ; so, on the other hand, by applying the promises to hypocrites, and by encouraging dreams, he also deceives them, and leads them into perilous presumption. I once was acquainted with a great professor, who was a man of much wealth, and who stood very high in his confidence, too high to admit of any doubting in believers. This person invited me and my wife to come and dine with him, which we did ; and he told us of a wonderful view that he had had, and of a voice that had spoken to him ; both of which were respecting the sonship of Christ ; and he was so pleased and charmed with his wild conceit, that he put it in the newspaper. He and I could not agree in our opinions ; we differed widely. He laboured hard to gain me over to his sentiments, but I was inflexible ; and therefore he ordered me out of his house, and I obeyed and went out ; and, as soon as I was gone out, I told my wife that that man would go mad ; and, about seven years after that, he went raving mad, and died so.

I knew another, a woman, and a very sensible one, and who attended for many years one of the brightest ministers which the church of England hath lately been honoured with, and was very fond of his ministry ; nor could she sit under any other. This woman had the promises of the gospel continually applied to her, as she thought,
and

and mentioned many of them to me ; and I once asked her how it was that none of them came to pass ? She replied, “ I know that they must all be fulfilled,” and added, “ God cannot be just except he does fulfil them.” Soon after this she had heard that I had insisted that God required worship in spirit and in truth ; and that a form of prayer was not sufficient ; and that some things in our forms of prayer were repugnant to scripture. At this she was much exasperated, and said, “ Such a fellow as that presume to take the work of our great reformers to pieces !” At last she began to sink in her confidence, and fearful bondage came upon her, which made her a burden to herself, and to all about her. A near relation of hers brought her up to my house in Winchester-Row ; but I was not at home. The request of her relation was, that she might come and lodge and board with me. My wife gave her to understand that it would not be agreeable ; so she went away, and not long afterwards she hung herself upon her bed’s head ; which fully convinced me that the implacable enemy of mankind had deceived her by applying those promises to her.

Poor Tom Smith, whom you know, or at least have heard something of, was wonderfully tossed to and fro, up and down, this way, by every scripture that came to his mind, however contradictory ; as for instance ; at some times the Lord had told him he was to go and settle at such a place, and then

then another text contradicted it, that he was to stay where he was. He mentioned to me the fearful state that he had been in, and the temptations that he had to suicide, and of the people that were gathered together about him in this his distress, and of the sudden deliverance, from misery to laughter, by the application of a passage of scripture, which I now forget, and which first set him off in a profession, as one that had obtained mercy; and of his joining himself to a church in the country; and, after some time, that one of my pamphlets fell into his hands, and of his reading it; and of this passage coming into his mind, "I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter." This he looked upon as an order from God to come to London to see me; and he came, but could not find me, and therefore went back again; and, if I mistake not, he came again, and found me not. However, the same text followed him, and he came the third time, if I mistake not, but not succeeding, was returning home; but, seeing a road across the fields which led to Hampstead, some passage occurred to his mind directing him to go there; and thither he went, and inquired of a shoemaker if he knew me: he answered, he did, and gave him a shilling, and sent him to another person in Hampstead, who knew where I lived; he gave him a direction to me, and put sixpence more into his hand. This appeared a kind Providence, for he had no money in his pocket; it

served also to confirm him that he was right in seeking me. At first I could make nothing of him, but thought him deranged, and gave him a trifle. However, he kept coming to me; for, Providence thus appearing for him confirmed him more and more that he was to go and see his supposed Peter; but, when he began to sink, and found his hopes give way, and madness come on, he was much astonished that he could be thus deceived, but was forced to own that the whole was nothing but the works of the devil; and, indeed, self-abhorrence, godly sorrow, evangelical repentance flowing from pardoning love, tenderness, meekness, and an abiding sense of his insufficiency for the great work, never appeared in him.

I once knew a gracious woman who laboured long under heavy persecution both from her husband and his friends, and who was long kept in fears and distress by the following text: "He will surely violently turn and toss thee like a ball into a large country: there shalt thou die." Isa. xxii. 18. It is spoken of Shebna's captivity, who was steward and treasurer of the king's household; and the devil applied it to this poor woman, and she construed it to mean that persecution was coming on the church, and that she should be banished into a strange country for her religion. And true enough she was, for soon after she died, and made a most glorious end; nor was there any violent turnings or tossings in her death, for she was taken
ill,

ill, and died in less than ten hours after. Thus the devil can apply scripture when it will serve his own turn, and promote his own interest. His aims with the children of God are to discourage them, to raise doubts in the mind, and to stir up unbelief; to call the truth of God, and the work of God on their souls, into question, that they may murmur, rebel, be discontented with their state, and unthankful to God for what they have. And here he often prevails by damping their affections, and so robs God of his praise and glory, by tempting the believer that he has no grace to thank God for; and this he partially believes, and so holds back the Lord's revenue. This is a temptation, it is plain, because every visitation of God disproves it, and expels it.

By applying scripture the devil encourages the presumptuous, and blows them up with pride and vain confidence, to dream of the goodness of their state, without any sight or sense of the heinousness of sin, or any humility under it, or sorrow on the account of it, and even to expect the great reward of inheritance without either pardon, righteousness, or holiness, by the Holy Ghost, which alone can give us right unto it, and meetness for it. Under these delusions the consciences of some are seared, so that they have no bands in their death; and the presumptuous, he goes on till his hope expires with him: " Their hope shall be as

the giving up of the ghost." Job xi. 20. In short, every believer is conscious to himself that he has a claim upon God, as his covenant God, and an interest in him. This is made manifest to him by the Spirit's work, and by the witness which the Spirit bears with our spirits; and such souls do expect to be dealt with as sons, not as slaves or criminals; and that the promises are yea and amen in Christ, and the reward sure to all the seed; a daily cross, and an ever-abiding Comforter; prosperity and adversity; purging the branch with trials, and making it more fruitful by fresh indulgences, and with union and communion with the living Vine. Thus the sheep, which enter by the right door, go in and out, and find pasture. When God speaks to his children his word never contradicts, but always agrees with that teaching which the holy anointing teacheth. Sometimes God speaks to encourage hope and expectation, as to Habakkuk: "The vision is for an appointed time; wait for it." Sometimes to support and fortify: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." Sometimes he speaks to stir up diligence: "Seek ye my face." And sometimes to encourage to prayer: "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice." But either power, life, peace, mercy, or love, always attend his voice to those that love his

his name. But sure I am that he never will send a word to the hearts of his children to make them mourn after his presence all their days, and yet mourn in vain. No: they that mourn shall be comforted: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." And all real praise must spring from his sensible presence, not his absence; from his goodness, not his anger. Therefore expect the fulfilment of his promises: "I will bear them from the womb, and to your old age I am he; and to hoary hairs will I carry you; even I will bear, and I will deliver you." Dear sister, adieu.

Ever yours in faith and affection,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXXVII.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I WAS very glad to hear, by one of your friends from London, that your health was much established by your late excursion. I sincerely hope it may please God to continue it to you; and likewise that it would please him that you may again have a prosperous journey to us, that you may come in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ. I would it was in my power to say a great deal about what I received from your last letter. But I have apparently lost all that I then received from it. Had I wrote at the time I received it, I do not know where my pen would have run to: and this was what kept me from writing; for my mind has been sorely exercised about my having made so free with you, in writing you such long letters. But, whether this distress comes from Satan or not, I have not wisdom to discover. However, at the time I read your letter it did sweetly confirm the work on my soul, and I seemed to be brought to a point about every thing that had been done upon me. But

now

now I have lost all; and I begin to call almost every thing in question.

It is in vain for me to attempt to describe the darkness, deadness, fretfulness, and rebellion, which I feel within. I complain with David, that "my strength is dried up like a potsherd." I do believe that there never was such a composition of ingredients in the world before as I am made up of. I am unstable as water; my strength is so small that I faint in every day of adversity. However, it can be of no use troubling you with such things as these; therefore I must conclude; but, amidst all, believe me ever to remain

Your affectionate friend

In the briars and thorns,

PHILOMELA.

The master desires his kind love to you. I send you this only by way of telling you that I cannot write.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

I PROMISED myself much happiness and satisfaction in the hope and prospect I had of one more interview with you at Gasson's Bower; and I have no doubt but you expected a second benefit in hearing the joyful sound once more in the old barn. But, alas! our purposes were broken off, even the thoughts of our heart. Job xvii. 11. We decreed the thing, but it was not established unto us. I was to go to the barn, and you sick to bed. O, the disappointment! Had I set out on a tour of pleasure I might justly have expected it; but I went hoping and expecting to hear the voice of my beloved. And was you disappointed? Is there no voice but that of the chief Shepherd by the mouth of his servants? Is there not a voice in providence? And is there not a voice in his rod? "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." Micah vi. 9. The Lord's voice crieth to the city of Zion now as well as to Jerusalem in the days of old; and those who have wisdom shall see

see the Lord's name; and that name is the angel of the covenant, who went in the cloudy pillar through the wilderness. This name is to be seen by those who have wisdom in the hidden parts of the heart: "All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the hearts." Therefore hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it; for all these things are appointed for thee, and many such things are with him.

I was much surpris'd last Lord's-day to hear that thou wast not as yet returned to the King's Dale, but that you was in hope of quitting the Bower this week, being somewhat restored to health again. I wish much to know whether this hath been among the all things that work together for good to them that love God. Hath he fulfilled his promise? Hath he strengthened thee upon the bed of languishing? Hath he made all thy bed in thy sickness? I am persuaded by the Lord that he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. Lam. iii. 33. It is to empty us of self, that we may savour more of him and of his good ointments. If the vessel of mercy goes but for a short space without the rod, without the cross, without discipline, without afflictions, without the furnace, it soon settles upon its old lees, and the scent remains, and we savour not of the things of God, but those of flesh and blood. Sanctified trials banish the spirit of this world from the mind, and keep those worldly cares
(which

(which too often choke the word) from rooting in the heart. When God comes with a fiery trial he goes through these briers and thorns, and consumes them all together. Isa. xxvii. 4. It was these that overtopped the good seed in the thorny-ground hearers. Fiery trials scorch these at the root, and the blasts of divine resentment wither them; and legal bondage to fear drives us to care for matters more weighty, and to seek for a more enduring substance; and, when sensible union with the living Vine begins again to take place, a better crop is produced. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Isa. lv. 13. Divine life within, and a verdant profession without, make the believer appear as a fir-tree, the sap of which is always up, and the leaf of which is never withered, but always green; and, when the robe of humility is put on, and the influences of divine grace perfume the soul, it is like the myrtle, low, green, and fragrant; and where these things are experienced, enjoyed, and felt, it is to be to the Lord for a name; it is the fulfilment and full proclamation of the name of the Lord, proclaimed before Moses; I mean, that of the Lord's being gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, &c. &c. And, as this is to be to the Lord for a name
of

of praise, so it is to be to the Lord God for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off. Isa. lv. 13. It is like the rainbow, that is a sign to God of the promise that he hath made to all men, that he will drown the world no more, and a sign to man that he shall not be drowned. But to us the former is a sign that God will no more be wrath with us nor rebuke us, and a sure sign to us that we never shall be drowned in destruction and perdition. The fir and the myrtle shall not be cut off; they never shall be cut asunder with the sword of justice, nor be separated from the communion and fellowship of God the Father, and God the Son: they shall ever abide in the favour of both. I think my dear sifter is a good deal relapsed into legal bondage; she has lost the Lord's presence with respect to sensible enjoyment; and now she lives too near home she creeps too much into self, and pores too much over the members and motions of the old man; and she has lived upon the old stock of past experiences so long that she has nothing left but the bare remembrance of them, and the hope which past experience hath wrought in her. Manna in the wilderness was to be gathered every day, except the sabbath; and you know that hidden manna is promised to us under the gospel. Water from the rock followed Israel, and they drank of it: and we have the promise of being watered every moment, and of being kept night and day. When the land of Canaan was to rest

rest on the seventh year, a blessing was promised on the sixth; and on the eighth year, when the new crop came in, some of the old store was to be found, that the householder might mix it with the new. And every scribe instructed unto the kingdom of God is to be like one of those old householders; he is to bring forth out of his treasures things new and old. But who are these stores for? The Lord tells you: "At our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved!" Song vii. 13. The passover offering was to be offered up but once in a year, in remembrance of Israel's great deliverance, and to lead their faith to their great Deliverer then to come, and to a greater deliverance by him; and we know that Christ our passover was sacrificed for us, and we are to keep the feast. But then there was to be a lamb offered every morning and evening throughout the year, which was called the daily sacrifice; and with which was to be offered a perpetual incense. This was to lead their faith to look daily to the Lamb of God, both for help and for life; and the sweet perfume of unctuous prayer and praise, under the influence of the spirit of supplication, must, as our incense, attend our daily looks to the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We are to live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us.

At thy first deliverance thou hadst little else but
banqueting

banqueting for a whole year; then came weaning time; the breast was put up, and stronger meat was brought forth; the sincere milk of the word was left for other little ones, who are coming after, and for those who are unskilful in the word of righteousness; whilst knowledge and understanding are to feed them which are of full age. Ezekiel's roll and John's little book, were both to be eaten, and they were sweet in their mouth; but, when they came into the belly, and discovered all the innermost parts of that, attended with the candle of the Lord, it caused much bitterness there, through the risings of inbred corruptions against the heavenly contents. John's little book produced the wise man's twofold ingredients: "The heart knoweth its own bitterness; and a stranger intermeddleth not with his joy." And this hath been the experience of all that ever received the word of God in power, in the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance. As for those who receive it into their head, and have their natural passions moved and stirred up under the sound of it, their joys seem long to abide; they are always the same; they have no changes of joy and bitterness, prosperity and adversity; they are not in trouble as other men, nor plagued as the people of God are; their strength is firm, until God's fan, or the midnight cry, comes on them; and then all their joys wither, like grass upon the house-top, "where-with the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth

bindeth sheaves his bosom." But God's choice of his people is made manifest to them in the furnace of affliction. When temptation and persecution began to fall heavy upon the apostles and primitive saints, when the sun waxed hot, and the fiery trial came on, the wayside hearers, the stony and thorny-ground hearers, those who went a warfare at their own cost, and those who began to build and were not able to finish; all went back and fell away. But God will bring his own elect through fire and through water: the former shall not kindle upon them, nor shall the latter drown them; in the furnace their election is made sure to them; "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will purify them as silver is purified, and try them as gold is tried; they shall call upon my name, and I will hear them, and I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Here is God's acknowledgment of them; he is not ashamed to be called their God: and here is their warrantable and compulsive claim upon him. By the faith of God's elect they shall say, The Lord is my God. And would my dear sister escape the furnace? Would she wish to carry all her dross and tin with her? Would she desire a whole heart that needs no physician? Doth not the Lord promise to look to, and dwell with, them that are of an humble and a contrite heart, and tremble at his word? to revive the heart of the humble, and the spirit of the contrite ones?

Come,

Come, old girl, thou hast been compassing the old mount, and poring over the old fretting leprosy long enough ; look once more, with Jonah, towards the holy temple. Jonah did more by looking than he did by kicking. Looking at the brazen serpent had better effect than looking at the bite, or complaining of the pain. Manoah and his wife did nothing but look on while the angel did wonderously before them ; and this was all that the disciples did when the great work was finished. There was none to help, there was none to uphold. The disciples followed to see the end. Matt. xxvi. 58. And what did we do when the great work was wrought in us ? We looked to him, and were saved ; we looked to him, and overcame him. And we must continue at this ; we must not look at the things which are seen, for they discourage us, but at the things which are not seen. We must look at the eternal things that Christ is in full possession of for us ; yea, we must run the race set before us, looking to the great possessor, the author and finisher of our faith.

If accused by Satan, law, or conscience, where can we look but to the advocate ? If exercised with God's chastening rod, or the reflections of fatherly anger, there is no where to look but to the great Mediator. If iniquities prevail against us, there is no hope but in the fountain opened by Christ, and in the fulness of grace treasured up in

Christ. If sick, we must look to the great Physician; if our own heart condemn us, to the end of the law for righteousness; and, if weak, to the hope of his people, and to the strength of the children of Israel. Dost thou believe, my sister, that the whole body mystical, from the least to the greatest, is complete in the everlasting Father, Head, and Representative, of the church? Canst thou believe what the divine Bridegroom asserts, that those who are called to the fellowship of him, are all fair, and that there is no spot in them? Dost thou believe that, when God laid our sins upon him, his righteousness became ours? that when he was apprehended we were let go? that when he died we suffered the law in him, who is a part of ourselves? that we were crucified with Christ, and with his dead body we arose? that for our justification he left the tomb, and we were raised up, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; accepted in the beloved, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and in him without fault before the throne? Hold fast then the head, to which the whole body is knit and joined, and from which the divine unction descends which every joint supplieth. All the bands of love and peace which hold us together, and all the joints of union, friendship, judgment, and affection, and all the confirmation and renewing of these, are of him and from him. This blessed head ministers nourishment to the whole body,
which

which body is bound up in the bundle of life, or in the bond of eternal love with the Lord our God.

The temptations and trials which have lately fallen to thy share are no other than such as are common to men. After I had been for a considerable time much indulged with the Lord's presence, and with such tender mercy and loving-kindness as is unspeakable, and with the fullest assurance of the reality of the work, and of my interest in his everlasting salvation, inasmuch as not a fear, a scruple, or even the shadow of a doubt, remained about it, it pleased the Lord to try me sorely; not only with the loss of these heavenly visits, blessings, and never-to-be-forgotten sensations, but all my corruptions appeared in all their infernal vigour. This sunk me; and peevishness, rebellion, and fretfulness, followed: then I went to striving against sin in my own strength; and this betrayed me into the shackles of legal bondage, till an army of unexpected terrors surrounded me, and the apparent anger of God, as I then supposed, pursued me on every side; and Satan, with his evil insinuations, suggested to me that all was a delusion; that God had done it to extort confessions of my own vileness and just deserts from my own mouth, that he might condemn me by them. And here I was almost ready to cast away all my confidence, despond, and get into madness. But the Lord fulfilled his promise again and again;

for he revived the work, and was as sure to shine upon it, and bring it forth to the light again, as ever Satan and unbelief were to call it in question. And so wilt thou find it, and so thou hast often found it already. The sentence of justification passes through the court of conscience at once, and sensibly silences every accuser that the poor condemned sinner has. Upon this both law and justice, sin, Satan, and conscience, let us go; and from that hour the tree of righteousness stands complete in the Lord, having both righteousness and strength. This work is perfect, and is not by any inquisition to be brought into court in order to be sifted up and canvassed over again. This would reflect dishonour upon the omniscient and impartial Judge. No: but when God hides his face it is for the trial of our faith, and that by his going and coming he may familiarize himself to us, and be the better known by us, and that we may be led to distinguish between flesh and spirit. The adversary takes advantage of these our desertions, and confuses us, and casts us into a hasty spirit, that he may confound and baffle our judgment; and when we are filled with confusion he spreads a dismal gloom over the mind, and obscures our evidences; and in our hurry the Spirit's witness is not attended to. But when the Lord comes he brings us forth to the light again, and we behold his righteousness. Then for our shame we receive double, and for confusion we rejoice in our portion;

portion; yea, in this world we possess double, and in the world to come everlasting joy shall be unto us (Isa. lxi. 7), for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

I long to know the state of your corn, whether your lord and master hath waded through this unparalleled harvest. It hath fallen to our lot to be cast on the stage of this world when perilous times are come. For many months before this war broke out I had little before my eyes but calamitous times, and nothing but wars and rumours of wars followed my fears; and now, for these five months back, famine is continually in my view, and little else upon my mind. Seed-time and harvest, promised to all, seems this year to be denied to us. And I have long prophesied that the awful rebellion discovered in this hour of temptation would be followed by some external or internal judgment; by famine, pestilence, or something awful. But no judgment so fatal as an internal one; I mean that of being given up to blindness of mind, hardness of heart, and being left under the awful curse of God. Many of our impostors and hypocrites in profession have been so engaged in political matters, and in the concerns of government, that they have neglected their lawful calling, and the concerns of their family, and have brought themselves to want bread. But it looks now as if they must fetch up their lost

time by working over-hours, even to keep themselves from starving.

I know, by the word of the Lord, that oppression will be the crying sin throughout this world when the Saviour comes to take to himself his great power to reign. And this sin will extort more lamentable cries from the poor and needy than even Pharaoh's cruelty did from the children of Israel; and a more conspicuous Deliverer will appear than ever Moses was. Read Psalm lxxii. And, what is more astonishing, I have fainted in praying God to remove what I see to be coming on. I have no heart to pray against it, my faith fails; and, if I attempt it, it is against wind and tide, for the Spirit helps me not; nor will he ever make intercession for us contrary to the will of God. Therefore I take it for granted that it is appointed for us. Not long ago our oppressors contrived an artificial famine; and it seems now as if God would send a real one, that the oppressor may have an opportunity of filling up his measure; for sure I am that God will never forget that work.

At present I am but poorly, very weak inwardly; which makes me often look to the end of my race; for, look which way I may, I see nothing but causes of grief and sorrow; and yet the whole bulk of professors seem to sit still and be at rest. They see the whole country blessed with gospel ministers,

nifters, and the work of the Lord going prosperously on every where; but I am so blind that I can see nothing of it, but quite the reverse; for, go where I will, I find here and there a poor perishing finner starving for want of the bread of life, and there are none to break it unto them. In my view of things this is a time of spiritual famine, when many of the poor and needy seek water, and there is none. Wells without water, and clouds without rain, we have plenty; but the ministry of the Spirit, and the power of God unto salvation, is rarely to be found. But we must leave the government upon the shoulders of the wonderful Counsellor; for none of the subjects of his kingdom shall ever perish, but shall have eternal life. I have run quite out of the way; but it is out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Our glass is running out apace, and the bitterness of death is past; life and immortality hath been brought to light in our souls; the incarnate Word hath quickened us; he hath chastened us sore, but he hath not given us over unto death. Then "wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin?" Out of the dark regions of the shadow of death have we been brought; our sins have been removed, and our guilt purged; he hath begotten us to a lively hope, and blessed us with inward peace; he hath circumcised our hearts to love him, and will not

suffer any thing to satisfy us short of his presence, his grace, and the light of his countenance; and, though these be often denied us, yet the time cometh when we shall see him as he is; and our present sorrows and sufferings shall be all forgotten; when we shall hear no more the groanings of Zion, nor shall her children say any more, "Behold, I am sick;" for all the remains of corruption shall be done away. Farewell, dear sister; and let me know by a few lines, as soon as you are able to write, what support, what relief, what encouragement, what views, prospects, meditations, smiles, or visits, you have been favoured with, in this last furnace; and you will much oblige

Your affectionate friend and brother,

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XXXIX.

To 'NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I HAVE received yours, and do most kindly thank you for the same. I was sorry to hear of your inward weakness; should be glad to know if it hath pleased the Lord to re-establish your health.

Some things in your letter convinced me that you still remain a prophet of the Lord to me; for you have described my feelings as true as if you had known all the workings of my mind for this fortnight past; though I know you could not have received my last little scrap of a letter till after yours was written.

Relapsed into legal bondage I am. O! it is a wretched captivity. You tell me to look once more towards God's holy temple. But, alas! I have no faith in exercise on the object of faith, nor yet on the promise. I feel the old man alive in all his members. Never, I think, did I experience such a frame since I descended from the mount. God has put me into his furnace, and has supported me there hitherto; though at times I fear his rod has been spent on me in vain. I am shut up from

the public means, where my soul has been often quickened under the word, through indisposition of body, for my tabernacle is kept very weak and low. Satan preaches me many lectures, and tries to raise in my mind hard thoughts of my God; and he too often succeeds. It is poor living on the old stock; indeed, it only keeps hope from giving up the ghost; it is living too near home, as you well observe. O! how does my soul long to have this veil rent. But I know that nothing will do it but a sight of Christ crucified. O! that he would work in my heart that contrition and godly sorrow, that with Mary I might sit at his dear feet and weep it out. My soul craves no greater blessing in this world. But the Lord has, I believe, some harder lessons to teach me; and I am slow of heart to learn, as well as to believe. I want to distinguish the voice of God in his rod, which you so sweetly treat of in your letter. But I am brought into darkness, and not into light, so that I cannot discern; therefore I need stroke upon stroke. My cry is, with Job, "Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me." I well know where the cause lies; it is that folly that is bound up in my heart; and there is so much of it in me that I fear there can be little else but the rod assigned for me. God grant I may be helped to bow and submit to his will. I know the rod is in the covenant: and I do believe that what I am called to endure is not vindictive wrath, but
fatherly

fatherly chastisement, intended for my good. But it is hard to bear; and the mind and thoughts will find employment; and it is, as you observe, poring over the old man and his workings; and I think sometimes that this gives Satan an advantage against me. But I cannot do the things that I would: "but the evil which I would not, that I do." How very unlike the myrtle you speak of am I, whose sap is, as you observe, always up, and whose leaf is ever green. But sure I am, and that from bitter experience, that there is not one grace of the Spirit will flourish in my heart when the beloved of my soul withdraws and hides himself from me. I often look over some of your former letters, which I received when in the midst of my joys, where you warned me of such days of darkness and desertion coming on me, by telling me that the days would come that I should desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, but I should not see it. But I would not believe it. I could not entertain a thought that I should ever fall into legal bondage again. But, alas! it has fallen to my share over and over again. Therefore, as Jesus said to one that came to him, I was to go and learn what that meaneth. And sure I am, as you well observe, that Satan can bring a dismal gloom on the mind. His aim with me lately is to bring my mind into darkness, by perplexing me with some part of the word of God; by endeavouring to make one part clash with another.

another. I have something at present which much puzzles me, and has for these two months past; and I do suspect he has a hand in it. But, as you have kindly invited me to use freedom, I would beg your thoughts on the passage where Abraham was commanded by God to offer up his son; and, after the angel had forbidden it, it is said that he looked and beheld a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and he took and offered it up instead of his son. But the mystery which I want light upon is this, how this ram can be a type of Christ as the sinner's surety. And yet it must be, because God accepted it as Isaac. Now, though Christ was God, yet he never suffered in his divine nature. Yet the blood of a ram, when slain, is expressly said, in Exodus, to be the blood of sprinkling; and, in Numbers, it is said to be the atonement. Nor can I understand how the passover lamb was a type of Christ; because he is, in the New Testament, said to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. When first it was brought to my mind I saw it a mystery, but did not think my being enlightened into it was any thing essential. But, as it dwelt on my mind, it led me on to the mystery of the Trinity, which I know I am very dark about; and I began to tremble, fearing I should be left to fall into some error respecting that great mystery, and so be left to stumble on the dark mountains; and, from the time my mind was oppressed with it, the dear Redeemer

Redeemer of my soul has been more and more obscured from my sight. I should have mentioned it to you when I was last with you, but I thought it better to make it part of the subject of a letter ; then I should, perhaps, have your answer to refer to at any time, which I have often found a second and third benefit from. I hope the Lord will give you something by which my mind may be relieved from its present perplexity. The latter part of your letter caused me some faintings of heart. It is a sad sign to a nation when God stops the breath of prayer, in his servants, for averting the judgments which they foresee coming on. Those must be bad days when God will not suffer his servants to stand in the gap. However, the word is gone out of his mouth that it shall be well with the righteous. I hope we shall not have a famine of the word, and then it shall be well with our souls, however we may be called to suffer in our bodies. I have tried to persuade H—— T—— to give you a few lines respecting what you wish to know ; but I do not know whether I shall prevail or not. I fear your patience will be tired out in reading this letter of complaints. Can only add, I remain.

Yours, in the Best of bonds,

In the King's prison.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

I RECEIVED thine epistle safe, and, by the contents of it, I perceive that thou hast finished thy song in the night. The melody of thy harp is exchanged for mourning, and thine organ to the voice of them that weep. Nevertheless I shall not change thy name, for thou must and shalt sing again; "They shall sing in the ways of the Lord." This the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. Thou must, my sifter, come in the good old way, the four first stages of which have been long pointed out. Noah's ark was to be made with first, second, and third stories; but the dove, when she returned, rested on the top till Noah put forth his hand and took her in to him. This ark appears to me to be more a type of the church than of Christ, for the church is seldom without unclean as well as clean; but no unclean creature (strictly speaking) can be experimentally in him, much less shut in by him, till the storms of wrath be past.

The temple of the Lord had an outer court, called the court of the Gentiles; the next was the
court

court where the worshipping Israelites assembled; the next was the sanctuary, where the priests performed their service; the next was the most holy place, accessible to none but God and his high-priest; and he must go through the court of the Gentiles, then through the court of the Israelites, then through the sanctuary and into the holy place. So Noah went from the earth to the lower story, then to the second, then to the third, and lastly he removed the covering of the ark, and looked out at the top. We must come, according to Peter, out of this world. This causes many to think it strange that we run not to the same excess of riot. Then come convictions of sin and sore temptations: "Though now, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations." Then come better days: "Whom, having not seen, ye love; and though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." But, when these joys are withdrawn, it appears as if some strange thing had happened unto us. This fiery trial is to try our faith, that it may appear more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, and shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, when the Lord will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" and "Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world." When this trial is over thou wilt find

find thy feet standing in a more exien place. So says Peter, " After that ye have suffered a while, the Lord make you perfect, strengthen, stablish, settle you." Keep these stages in view. There is, and must be, a coming out of the world; and, when this is done, there is a watching at Wisdom's gate, which answers to the court of the Gentiles; and, even when kind invitations come suitable to our case, we must not ascend: " When thou art bidden to a wedding," says Christ, " sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden." We must imitate the Saviour. He first appeared in the form of a servant; and, when the law comes home to us, our baseness as bond-servants appears; bound under sin, Satan, death, and the law, we are. This sets us sensibly down in the dark regions of the shadow of death, and in the strong holds of sin and Satan. Here Christ shines first upon us: in this our low estate he remembers us, and says unto us, " Friends, go up higher." The next stage brings us to his feet: they shall sit down at his feet: " Every one shall receive of thy words." Now he appears pacified towards us, and we remember our own evil way, which was not good, and lothe ourselves in our own fight for our iniquities. But he dwells with the humble and the contrite, " to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones." Now he puts us forth into the joy of the Lord. This encourages us to free-
dom

dom and sweet familiarity, to communion and fellowship. And here our mountain seems to stand strong, and we are ready to think that we shall never be moved. I know of but one stage higher than this that ever I arrived at. This stage brings Christ nigh, as evidently set forth crucified among us; and we look at, admire, and wonder at him. This is the Lord manifesting himself to us, and dwelling in us. But after this he leads our thoughts higher; for, after we have looked at him, mourned over his sufferings, and been stung with hatred to self and sin on the account of them, he raises us up with another appearance of himself, and that is as risen from the dead, crying out, "All hail!" This raises us up to his glorification, and we rise to a lively hope of his resurrection from the dead. This comforts our souls, that his sufferings are over, and that "death hath no more dominion over him." And now our hope is admitted within the veil, we rise to newness of life under the influence of the Spirit of love and joy; and not only are our affections admitted to God's right hand, where he sitteth, but we are "made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." This is the highest stage in the divine life. The highest receptacle in the temple from the ground-floor was the galleries. Ezek. xli. 15, and xlii. 3. Into these (if I mistake not) the Jewish women were admitted. This is dwelling on high, and seeing the King in his beauty; whereas,

whereas, when he is exhibited to us upon the cross, he looks in his sufferings like a sacrifice, or as one made sin for us, and as numbered with the transgressors, but by no means as a king. It was as glorified, enthroned, and crowned with glory and honour, that he appeared to Ezekiel, Daniel, and John. And in this appearance the holy spouse saw him; "The hair of thy head is like purple: the King is held in the galleries." Song vii. 5. Purple is a royal colour, and in his royalty she saw him; and, though she had often had a glimpse of him as leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills, standing behind the wall, looking in at the window, and shewing himself through the lattice, and oftentimes had felt the finger of his power making her bowels to move, and had felt his name as an ointment poured forth, and at times caught hold of him, yet she could not retain him, as she owns, "My beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; my soul failed when he spake," &c. &c. But at last he tells her to turn away her eyes from him, for she had overcome him: then she says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." And he certainly is held or bound in the galleries; for by heavenly-minded souls, who have enjoyed him, and who never can rest without him, nor find any satisfaction in any thing short of him, he is held, and to such he is bound, in the bond of everlasting love, and that by his own promise, and by his own

own act and deed: " I will betroth thee unto me in judgment; I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, in loving-kindness, in faithfulness, and for ever; and thou shalt know the Lord." And, as he is thus bound to a wife, he will never seek to be loosed. John, in his Revelation, saw him in his priestly garments among the candlesticks, and as king upon his white horse; but as glorified in both. This wonderful appearance so astonished John that he fell to the ground; but it was intended to raise John's conceptions higher than before; for, though he had known Christ after the flesh, yet from that time forward he knew him so no more.

I have been much of late meditating on what Paul calls the new man in us. Jeremiah says, " Thy word was found, and I ate it, and it was the joy and rejoicing of my heart." John and Ezekiel ate the roll and the little book, and declared that they were sweet as honey; but what that mouth is which feeds so sweetly on the promises and on the passover lamb, is hard to describe. " A feast of fat things, of marrow and fatness, and of wines on the lees well refined," it certainly is. We have an altar to eat at, and certain it is that the new man has got his mouth which feeds upon spiritual provision, digests it, and receives nourishment and satisfaction from it; but this mouth remains a mystery to me. The new man has got his nose, but I cannot tell what it is. All Christ's garments

smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces; and God doth make manifest the savour of the knowledge of Christ among his people. This we know; and, on the other hand, if one come into our company whose scent remains in him, whose scent is not changed, who is settled on his old lees, what a stinking savour do such little foxes send forth! But who can describe that nose that so sensibly distinguishes between the odour of Christ's garments, and the stench of the foxes, and the stinking savour of dead flies? Nor is the new man without his ears. What is spoken to the outward ears hath no effect if it goes no farther: "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak friendly to her heart." Hosea ii. 14. Hence it is said of Christ that "he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street." Isa. xlii. 2. And yet many will say in the last day, "We have eaten in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets." They heard the voice of the man; but it is only the dead, or self-condemned, that hear the voice of the Son of God and live: "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." John xviii. 37. And all his sheep hear his voice, and follow and distinguish his voice from all others; and Christ hath dropped his benediction both upon such ears and eyes: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." And I know that he hath often spoke to my inmost soul,

and I heard the voice, felt it, and understood it; but my outward ears had nothing to do with it. But what those ears are that hear so plainly when he speaks friendly to the heart, I cannot describe. The eyes of the new man are as wonderful: "The world sees me no more," says Christ, "but ye see me; and because I live ye shall live also." And again: "I will send the Comforter to you, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, nor knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Moses saw him that is invisible; the patriarchs saw the promise at a distance; "A wise man foresees the evil, and hides himself;" and the saint, in his first love, sees "the King in his beauty, and the land which is very far off." And I have seen my dear Master in open vision for many months together. But what these eyes are is a mystery. Paul says these things are spiritually discerned; and he tells us that the eyes of our understanding are opened; but he doth not explain what those eyes are. I know that faith discovers wonders. But the soul hath more eyes than one. What are the eyes of the understanding? The new man hath got his affections also, which are peculiar to him, the objects of which are, first, God, and his word, and his saints. These affections, love, or charity, are the principal parts of the new man; and, when in exercise, they fill the soul with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

glory. Nor is the new man without his hands. There is a something that holds the beloved fast, and will not let him go. These hands hold fast the faithful word, and every thing that Christ hath given us, that no man take our crown. These hands appear to be the powerful actings of faith, which, under the Spirit's influence and operations, are very powerful. I have often been thinking of the feet of the new man, by which we go in and out and find pasture; yea, God says "They shall mount up as upon eagles' wings, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." I know believing is called a coming to God, and we are said to walk by faith and not by sight; but I think love must have her part in these wonderful journeys of the soul; for faith can neither work nor walk but by love.

Thus I have sent my dear sister a few of my secret thoughts upon these things. But, as Milton says, "I find no end, in wondering mazes lost;" and yet there is a secret pleasure in soaring and diving, though I can neither reach the top nor fathom the bottom.

Whatever name the Lord's elect are called by, the Saviour is generally set forth or represented by something suitable to it. They are debtors, and he the surety; subjects, and he the king; children, and he the father; lion's whelps, and he the lion; lambs, &c. and he was represented by the ram. A lamb slain from the foundation of the world he is, and that in a two-fold sense:

first, in the purpose of God; and, in the next place, he was typically slain by Abel's sacrifice. It is true he did not suffer in his divine nature; he was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit;" he suffered in the flesh, and bore our sins in his own body upon the tree. Yet, you have no call to wonder at his being typified both by a ram and a lamb, when the scriptures often set him forth both in his seniority and in his youth. In the book of Daniel, where he is represented as the judge of quick and dead, the hair of his head is said to be as white as the pure wool; and he is the Ancient of Days; but in the Song of Solomon, where he is described as a wooer, his locks are said to be bushy, and black as a raven.

The best knowledge, and the safest that thou wilt ever attain to respecting the Trinity in this world is, a knowledge of God the Father's love shed abroad in thy heart. This says, "Yea, I have loved thee, and with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. The next is the voice of the blood of sprinkling, which speaks pardon, peace, and reconciliation, which are better things than the blood of Abel. The third is the Spirit's voice, crying, Abba, Father. These are the witnesses of the Trinity; and these three agree in one. The Lord for ever bless thee.

The Desert.

NOCTUA AURITA.

LETTER XLI.

To NOCTUA AURITA, in the Desert.

I EMBRACE this opportunity of sending you a few lines to inform you a little how I go on. When I wrote to you last my soul was melted within me because of trouble; I was fainting in the day of adversity, for my soul was much discouraged because of the way. But the Lord, who comforteth those that are cast down, and who is ever a refuge for the poor and needy, has condescended to appear for me, to raise my hope and expectation, being once more brought to enjoy the presence of him who is all in all to my soul. And I think I do now know something of what the apostle calls "rejoicing in hope;" and this hope I find to be an anchor to my soul, for it does enter into that within the veil. The tempest with which I was tossed has ceased its raging, and a blessed calm is brought to my mind. I am sure Satan himself has felt it; he could not endure it; and unbelief was put to the blush, while faith laid fast hold of his word of promise which was spoken to my soul. How true are the words of the wise man when he says, "As cold water to a thirsty
foul,

soul, so is good news from a far country." How a word from God does melt and humble us, and bring us to his feet ! And I am sure that nothing else will do it ; though in seasons of desertion Satan is as busy with me as ever he can be with any poor soul, to stir up in me hard thoughts of my kind and gracious God and Redeemer. But I find that afterwards these things make deep furrows in my soul, when contrition of heart and godly sorrow operate under the influence of the blessed Spirit. I think I never did before see the distinction so clear between the old man and the new, or what Paul calls flesh and spirit, as I do now. This knowledge I have got in my last conflict, and by experience, which has been truly bitter to my soul ; therefore I hope it will abide. My mind seems at present much impressed with a sense of the goodness and loving-kindness of the Lord to me. I believe he will not let me run away from him, because, when I am bent on going on in ways that are not good, he lays his rod on me to stop me. How oft has he called back my wandering feet ! I may well say, " Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all my days to this present moment ; " though Satan has often stirred up such rebellion in my heart that I have even called God's ministers liars when they have prophesied good concerning me. But, notwithstanding this, the Lord has put in my heart some good thing, which will not find satisfaction in
any

any thing short of his blessed presence; and, as this is his sweet work, he will accept it. I was long looking for some good thing in myself to recommend me to his favour, instead of receiving all good from him. And, indeed, I find this, that when he withdraws from me, with respect to his sensible presence, and leaves me in the dark, so that I cannot see one step of the path, that then the old legal leaven in my tabernacle will work and ferment to set me to struggle and strive in my own strength. But, when God has appeared for me after such a season, how has my folly been manifested, and I have called myself a thousand fools; and have seen clearly that, if, instead of striving and struggling, I had continued to have entreated the Lord to help and deliver me, I should have been brought out of my difficulties and darkness much sooner. I am sure, from my own experience, that, if God was not to give us something to keep hope and expectation alive, they would soon give up the ghost in such seasons of darkness. But, blessed be his name, he will never forsake his own work. I was sorry to hear you was poorly with a cold. I shall be glad to hear you are better; and I need not say a letter will be very acceptable. You know that I am better in my poor tabernacle than when I wrote last; I think I do begin to see that this late affliction is among the all things that shall work together for my good. I know the Lord has taught
me

me something by it, and supported me through it, and did keep me when Satan, that old serpent, and his accursed crew, did compass me about like bees, when I was in such a situation that I could neither cry nor call on my God for help. He did then go to the utmost length of his chain, and would, I have no doubt, if he had been permitted, have torn me to pieces, soul and body. What God is like unto our God? O that I could be assured that I should never more entertain one hard thought of him respecting any of his dispensations towards me! But I must conclude, which I do with wishing you prosperity both of soul and body, with much of his presence who is the health of both; and believe me to remain

Your affectionate friend and sister
in the Lord,

The King's Dale.

PHILOMELA.

LETTER XLII.

To PHILOMELA, in the King's Dale.

THINE epistle afforded me much joy. "Blessed are they that endure temptation, for when they are tried they shall receive the crown of life," which he hath promised to them that love him. Thou didst say, (O thou of little faith!) "I shall not see him;" yet judgment was before him, and he hath brought thee forth to the light, and thou hast beheld his righteousness. How sweet and endearing are his visits after his long absence! How welcome are his returns after our souls have sat solitary, as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, as a wife of youth refused and deserted! But he soon makes us forget the shame of our youth, and the reproach of our widowhood; and the adversary that saluteth us with a "Where is now thy God?" sees it, and vanishes, inflamed with rage. But he only departs for a season. Nevertheless the armour of God is sufficient to repel the force of all his artillery. God hath planted his fear in our hearts that we may not depart from him. He hath renewed, enlightened, instructed, and influenced our consciences

sciences by his Spirit, that he may check and reprove us for all that is wrong, and approve of all that is right ; and we must exercise ourselves day and night not to offend him. We are favoured with the witness, seal, and first-fruits, of the Spirit, and are commanded not to vex or grieve him, lest he suspend his freedom, his consolations, and his much-needed assistance, in prayer. The Redeemer has left us also his last legacy, I mean peace ; and we have the promise of the enjoyment of it, unless we make to ourselves crooked paths. We have the promise of his presence, and of the light of his countenance likewise, unless our sins hide his face from us, or cause him to return to his place, till we acknowledge our offences, and seek him early. We have also that faith that is of the operation of the Spirit of God ; and nothing can unsettle, weaken, damp, or deaden the vigorous actings of faith like our misconduct. Besides these things, we have the helmet of hope, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, the sword of the Spirit, and all sorts of prayer ; and these things are more mighty bulwarks against Satan than all the fears of death and wrath, yea, than all the horrors, terrors, threatenings, and curses, of a broken law, which the disciples of Moses pride themselves so much upon. Let my dear sister pay due attention to these things which accompany salvation, and she shall have rejoicing in herself alone, and not in another, and shall praise her
 God

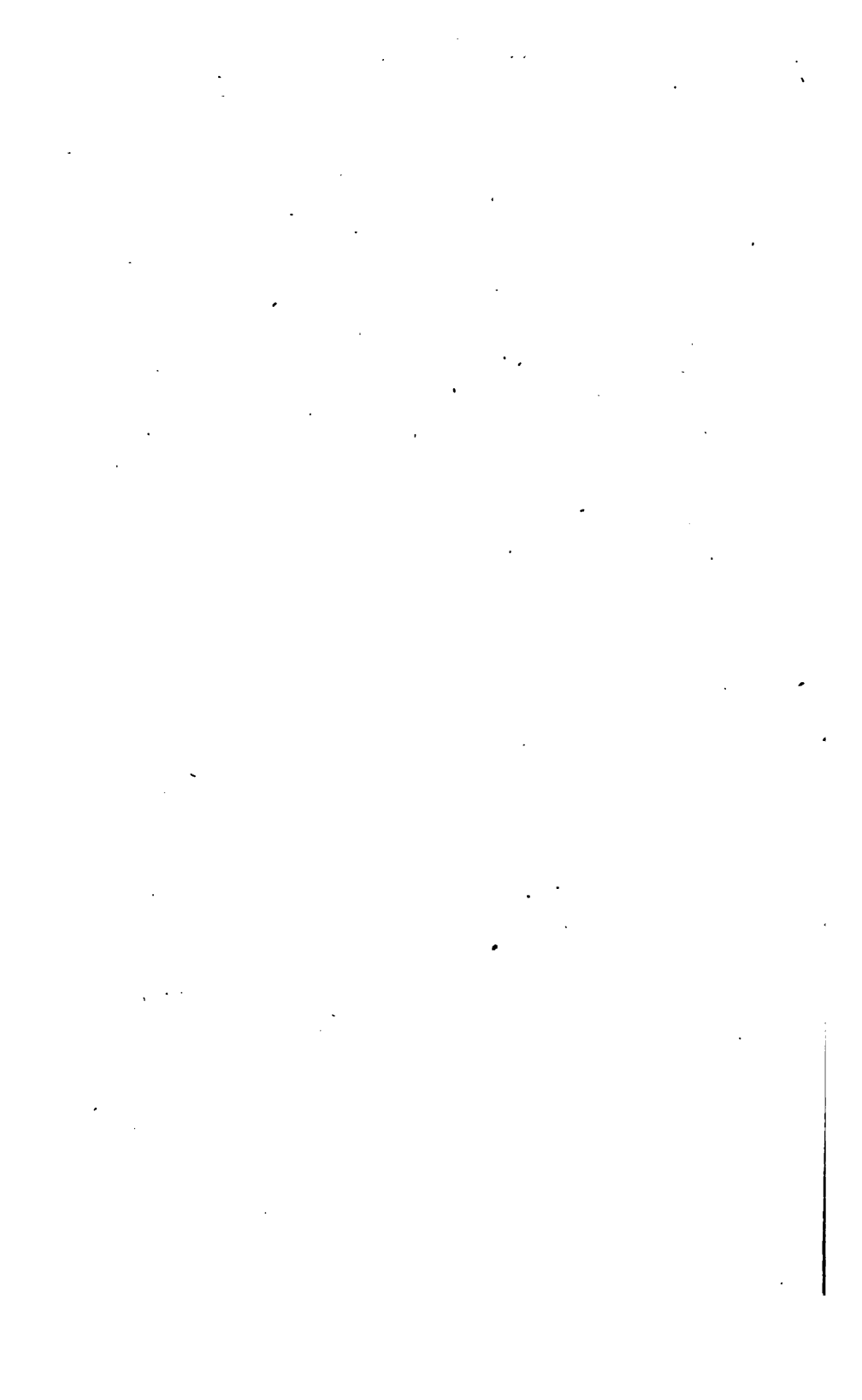
God with joyful lips. Moreover, as God hath restored her again to the joys of his salvation, let me admonish her not to act the part of a hawking pedlar, lest they get weary of her ; but let her entertain her beloved with praises and thanksgivings, as he entertains her with the discoveries of his love. My kind love to the good man of the house, and tell him I have remembrance of him in my poor prayers. Excuse haste, as I am a servant to many. Dear sister, adieu.

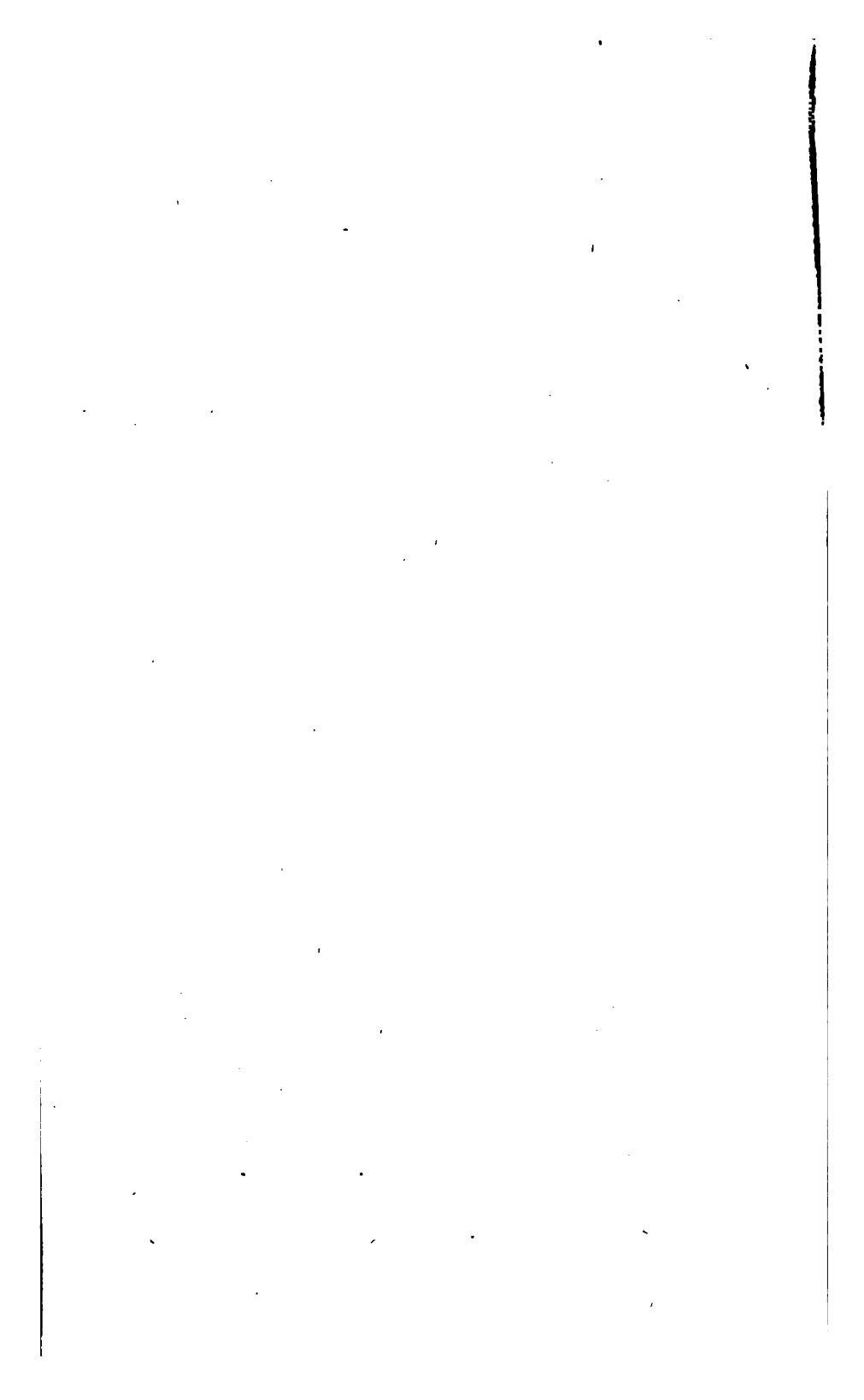
Ever thine in the brotherly covenant,

NOCTUA AURITA.

The Desert.

THE END.





(3)

A WATCHWORD AND WARNING

FROM
THE WALLS OF ZION;

A SERMON,

DELIVERED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL,
ON TUESDAY, DEC. 19, 1797.

Being the Day appointed for Public Thanksgiving.

BY

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD-STREET,
AND AT MONKWEEL-STREET MEETING.

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore
bear the word from my mouth, and give them warning from me. Ezek. iii. 17.

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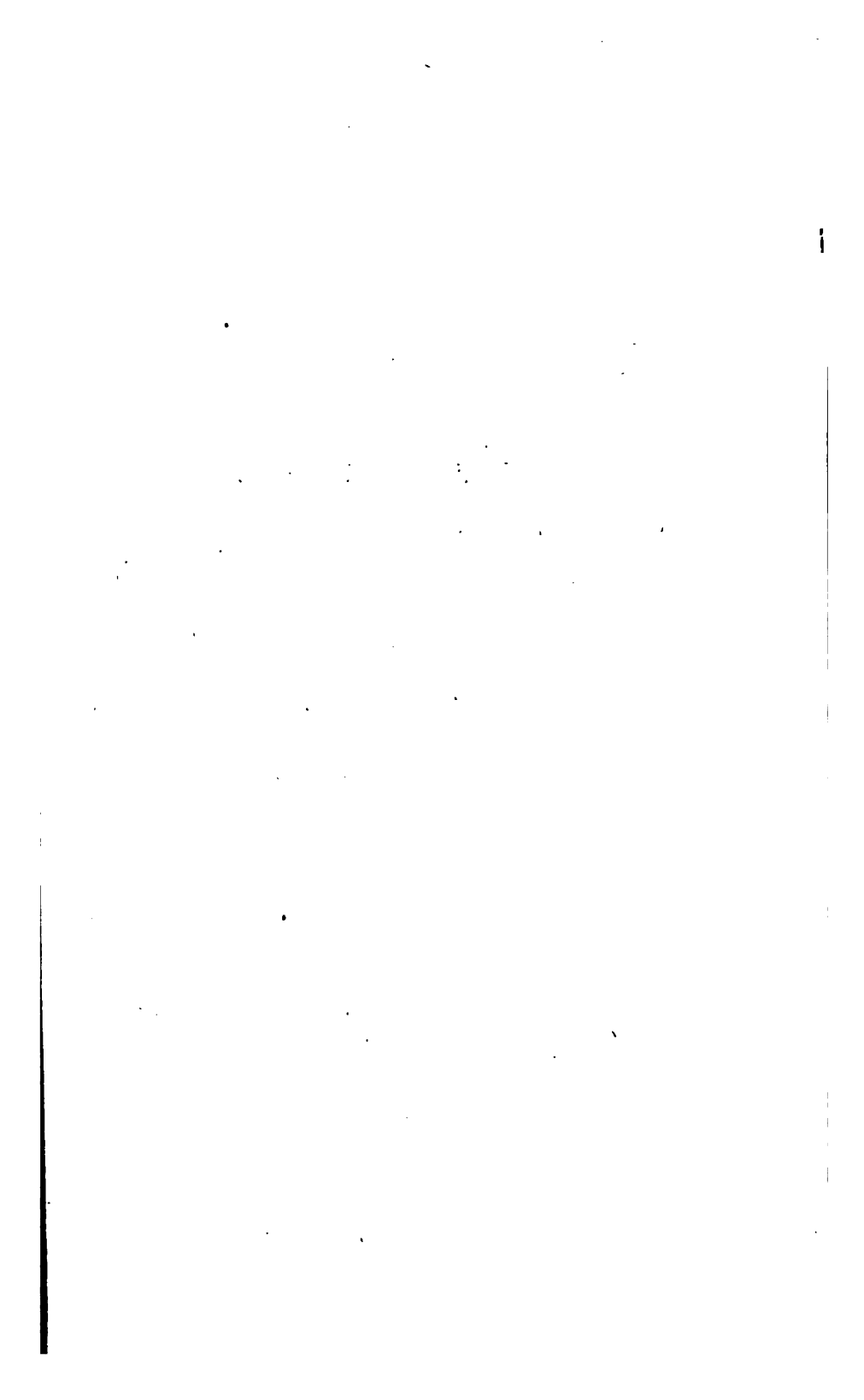
1804.

T. BENSLEY, Printer, Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London.

TO
THE REV. J. JENKINS,
LEWES, SUSSEX;

AND
JOHN CHAPMAN,
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT RICHMOND,
SURREY;

THIS SERMON
IS INSCRIBED.



A
S E R M O N.

YE THAT HAVE ESCAPED THE SWORD, GO AWAY,
STAND NOT STILL: REMEMBER THE LORD
AFAR OFF, AND LET JERUSALEM COME INTO
YOUR MIND. Jer. li. 50.

I AM very glad to see so many of you here this morning, and that your pleasure lies in attending upon the worship of God in his house of prayer. On such public occasions as these there are such crowds attend, that it often happens that some accident or other befalls some of the innumerable spectators: some perhaps will be carried home at night with broken bones, and perhaps some that are gone from home will return alive no more; but be it, however, as it may, I will be bold to say that we shall return home with the most peace, and in the possession of the best conscience.

A few years before this public calamity befell the Jews, reigned that pious young king Jofiah, so much lamented by the Jews, and even by the prophet Jeremiah, that the mourning at his death became a proverb in Israel. 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. He was slain by Necho king of Egypt, who was going to engage the king of Assyria by the river Euphrates. The king of Egypt sent Jofiah word that he was not come out against him, but against the Assyrians; and he informed him that God had sent him, and was with him; and therefore he charged him not to meddle with God, that he destroyed him not. But Jofiah paid no regard to this, not in the least suspecting that God was with a king of Egypt. This was one of the Lord's Shibboleths, for God was with Necho; and Jofiah fell by the hand of the king of Egypt, as he told him he should if he meddled with God.

After the death of Jofiah, the people of the land made Jehoahaz king instead of his father, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And the king of Egypt dethroned him, and condemned the land in an hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold, and made Eliakim king instead of his brother, and changed his name to that of Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz and carried him into Egypt, where he died.

Jehoiakim reigned eleven years in Jerusalem, and did nothing but evil in the eyes of the Lord. And against this king it was that the king of Babylon made
made

made war : and he took him, and laid him in irons to carry him to Babylon. And with him he took also the vessels of the temple, and seven thousand foldiers, the smiths and craftsmen a thousand, &c. 2 Chron xxxvi. 6. And at his departure he made Jehoiachin king in his stead. And after he had reigned three months the king of Babylon put him down, and took him to Babylon, and made Zedekiah his brother king in his room ; and it was in this king's reign that Jerusalem was taken and destroyed ; and his wickedness was the principal cause of it ; for he had made a covenant with the king of Babylon in the house of God, and given him the right hand of fellowship, and swore fidelity to him in the name of God, and that he held his crown by him, for it was Nebuchadnezzar that had made him king. After he had reigned eight or nine years he rebelled against the king of Babylon, broke his covenant, violated his oath, and hired the armies of Egypt to assist him against Nebuchadnezzar. In the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar and all his host came against him, and besieged him until the eleventh year of his reign. And on the ninth day of the fourth month the city was broken up and taken. It was this king that cut and burnt the prophet Jeremiah's roll, written by the order of God : under him Jeremiah the prophet was put into the dungeon : he was intolerably vile, and both princes and priests followed

his example. *The chief of the priests transgressed very much after the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of God which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14, 15, 16.

The prophet Jeremiah, whom God had made an iron pillar and a brazen wall against this impious king, and all that were in the bond of iniquity with him, seems much concerned that the righteous and the wicked should be involved together in this common calamity: to relieve the prophet's mind upon this matter, God gives him a vision of two baskets of figs. The fruit of one basket was vile, and that of the other excellent; the former represented the wicked, the latter such as obeyed the voice of the Lord. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return*
unto

unto me with their whole heart. Jer. xxiv. 5, 6, 7. It is to these that my text speaks, *Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.* In handling these words, I will

1. Treat of those *who escaped the sword.*
2. Take notice of the prophet's watchword, and of the secret that lay under it, *Go away.*
3. It is repeated, or re-enforced, *Stand not still.*
4. The exhortation, *Remember the Lord afar off.*
5. To let their city have a place in their heart. *Let Jerusalem come into your mind.* And I shall conclude with comparing some things in their case with ours, and go through my text in new testament language.

To begin with those who escaped the sword.

God, in the midst of this surrounding calamity, had set before the darlings of his soul a *door of hope*, and provided a refuge from this blast of the terrible One, when it came as a destroying storm against their walls, and that was submitting their necks to the yoke of the king of Babylon. *And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death. He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall live, and his life shall be unto him*

him for a prey. For I have set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the Lord: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. Jer. xxi. 8, 9, 10.

This was the touchstone and the way that God made for the obedient to escape : this was the trial. There was to be no safety in the city of God ; no shelter in the temple, the residence of God ; no protection at his altar, nor yet in a legal sacrifice ; no life or safety, but by flying into the jaws of an heathen and a cruel enemy. And that which made this trial the more perplexing was, the false prophets which the devil sent to withstand, confront, and contradict the prophet of God ; this afforded plenty of ground for halting with the simple, who believe every word ; and it served to confirm the rebellious in their infidelity. Jeremiah prophesied subjection to the king of Babylon seventy years. *Hananiab comes into the temple of God, and in the presence of the priests and all the people, saying ; Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, that Nebuchadnezzar took away from this place. And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jeboiakim king of Judah, with all the captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the Lord: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. Jer. xxviii. 2, 3, 4.*

God orders his prophet to put bands and yokes upon his neck, in token of Judah and other nations serving

serving the king of Babylon. *And they shall serve him, saith God ; and his son, and his son's son.* Hananiah breaks the yoke off Jeremiah's neck, and *spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Even so will I break the yoke of the king of Babylon from the neck of all nations, within the space of two full years.* Jer. xxviii. 11. This is the cry of, *Lo, here ; and lo, there.* The children of falsehood cleaved to the false prophet, and conspired against Jeremiah ; and those of the truth cleaved to the prophet of God ; and this manifested the children of God and the children of the devil. Those who trusted in Hananiah's lie were cut off by the sword of the Spirit ; the word of God was a favour of death unto death to them, for those were slain first by the sword of God ; as it is written, *They come (that is the Egyptians and the Jews) to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.* Jer. xxxiii. 5. These trusted in a lie ; and others who knew not the voice of God from the voice of Satan, halted between two opinions, till the bread of the city was all exhausted, and the sword of war brought them to a conclusion with a witness.

But those who knew the Shepherd's voice took the warning, and obeyed the voice of the Lord ; and to these the word of God was a favour of life unto life ; they believed it, and had their life for a prey :

prey: thus *the just lived by faith*. These escaped the sword of the Spirit, for they were neither cut off nor slain by it. And, to confirm these in their obedience and confidence, God sent an awful message to Hananiah, who had been laid in their way by the devil as a stumbling-block. *Go, and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, I have put a yoke of iron upon all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and I have given him the beasts of the field also. Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; the Lord hath not sent thee, but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord. So Hananiah the prophet died the same year, in the seventh month. Jer. xxviii. 14—17.* This awful judgment upon the lying prophet confirmed them who had obeyed the voice of the Lord and fell away to the Chaldeans; *When the wicked are smitten, the righteous will beware;* and by which they escaped being slain by the sword of the spirit.

And they escaped the sword of justice also. *The sword of the Lord shall devour from the one end of the land even to the other end of the land: no flesh shall have peace. Jer. xii. 12.* But those who yielded the obedience

obedience of faith were screened from this sword: *By fire and by sword did the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord was many.* But those who received the truth, and trusted in the Lord, escaped both the curse of the law and the sword of justice, which always go together: *My sword shall be bathed in heaven, and shall come down upon Idumea, the people of my curse, to judgment; nor shall such be cut asunder, nor have their portion with hypocrites and with unbelievers.* In short, they escaped being slain by the sword of the Spirit; they escaped the sword of justice also, and the sword of war; their souls were to live, and their life was given to them for a prey wherever they came. Which leads me,

2dly, To consider their watchword, *Go away.* This captivity had been foretold by many eminent prophets, even by Moses: *And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other end of it; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.* Deut. xxviii. 64, 65. To this Daniel alludes in his supplications. The royal psalmist predicts this long captivity: *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us*

us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Psa. cxxxvii. But the prophet Isaiah is more full than any upon this head; he not only foretells it, but their restoration from it, and names the king who should proclaim their enlargement, and who shall build both their city and their temple. These prophecies confirmed those in their faith who had obeyed the voice of the Lord by Jeremiah; and, they being instructed by the prophet in the mind and will of the Lord, and being in this secret, he gives them the watchword, before the city was taken, *Go away, stand not still.*

Moreover he had informed those obedient ones that God had hid his face from this city, and that the temple was to be burnt with fire; and that, if they would seek and find the presence of God, they should find him in the place of their captivity. Therefore he says, *Thus saith the Lord God, Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.* Ezek. xi. 16. Those therefore that would find God, and all those who pined after the sanctuary service, were to find his presence, and himself a sanctuary, in these countries, and nowhere else. Hence the watchword, *Go away, stand not still.*

Moreover, all their gain in godliness was to be found

found there—I will send them into captivity for their good; mine eyes shall be upon them for good, and they shall live, and return again, and I will give them peace and an expected end. Therefore *go away, stand not still*. Besides, there was no safety but under the yoke of the king of Babylon; he that submits to his yoke, and serves the king of Babylon, shall have his life for a prey. Hence the warning, *Go away, stand not still*. But again, the king of Babylon was God's servant, and to serve him was serving God; and, as the rich and wicked oppressors among the Jews kept their brethren in bondage, into bondage they should go, and be made to know what the yoke of servitude was, who were so fond of yoking others; but those that obeyed the voice of the Lord were to fare much better. *The Lord said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.* Jer. xv. 11. Therefore if you will be obedient to the Lord of hosts, and believe his word; if you will have your life for a prey, and live by faith; if you will follow the Lord, who is gone from hence to Babylon; if you will escape the impending judgment and inevitable destruction; if you will seek the promised good treatment, and have the eyes and heart of God upon you for good; if you would enjoy peace, and arrive at the promised and expected end—*Go away, stand not still*.

Again,

Again, God will send no more prophets to Jerusalem in your absence, he will raise you up prophets in Babylon; Ezekiel is already there to meet you in the person of God, to welcome you at your coming, and to be over you in the Lord, and to encourage all them that have obeyed the voice of the Lord by me; and will predict, even there, the same destruction to them who defend the city against the Chaldeans that I do; you will there see that we speak the same things, and tread in the same steps—therefore *go away, stand not still*. I now come to the enforcement of the exhortation,

Stand not still. It will not do to consult carnal reason—she will plead the safety of those who abide in the city and in the temple; but *trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these*. Jer. vii. 4. For God will be a little sanctuary to you in the countries where you shall come—therefore *stand not still*. Consult not with flesh and blood. Nature will argue about the length of the way, the cruelty of the heathen, their abominable idolatry, the strangeness of their customs, their unknown dialect, and the unlawfulness of offering sacrifices to God in a strange land—but the decree of heaven, the predictions of ancient prophets, and the word from God, is, that this land shall lie desolate seventy years—therefore *stand not still*.

Standing still to consider occasions halting, and unbelief will work in those that halt, and the false prophets

Prophets will gain an ascendancy over you, and the majority that are led by them will have a sad influence and bad effect upon your minds, to the endangering of both soul and body—therefore *stand not still*, lest by such consultations you stop, yea, turn back, and perish in the public calamity—remember *Lot's wife*, who was ordered not to look back, nor tarry in all the plain—therefore *stand not still*. I have no call to tell you where to go, you know that already, it is to Babylon; there go, there is your safety and your protection; and remember the *Lord afar off*, and let *Jerusalem* come into your mind.

Remember the *Lord afar off*, &c. To encourage you to this you have several ancient prophecies, as well as the orders of God by me. *And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. And upon them that are left alive of you, I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from the sword; and*

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they shall fall when none pursueth. But, if they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity; then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.
Lev. xxvi.

Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the temple and the promise of God in answer thereto, is full to the same purpose. *If thy people sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness: and so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built, for thy name: then bear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling*

dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them. 1 Kings viii. And the answer is, *That the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the Lord said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me : I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built to put my name there for ever : and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.* 1 Kings ix. 1—3. These were the prophecies that went before, which were full of counsel and instruction to those who were ordered *to go away, and to remember the Lord afar off.*

This kind caution was to guard them against the subtilty and thievery of the devil, who watches and lies in wait to steal the word of God out of the heart which is sown in it, that we may become unfruitful. Hence the apostle's exhortation, *We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.* If ever we let them slip, it is by the cunning of the devil, who diverts our minds with some worldly rattle, while he robs the memory of the word of God sown therein—therefore *remember the Lord afar off.* Remember the promises that he hath made to you, of being with you, and a little sanctuary to you ; and of his sending you there for

your good, of his setting his eyes and his heart upon you, of the happy return he has promised you, and the peaceable end he will bring you to: and as God is most faithful, so he will without fail make his promise good. Meditate upon these things, ponder them over in your mind. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help; therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.* Psalm lxiii. 5—7. *Remember the Lord afar off.* Remember to put your trust and confidence in him, to rest and rely upon him, and to expect every needful and promised help from him. *Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed; he will bear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.* Psalm xx. 6, 7. Remember to call constantly upon his name, and be thankful for his discriminating grace in sparing you from those that have not obeyed the voice of the Lord: for those, to a man, shall fall by famine, by pestilence, and sword; but you are the few hairs that have cleaved to the covenant Head, and are wrapped up in the skirt of him that shall be called *The Lord our Righteousness.* Ezek. v. 3. *And let Jerusalem come into your mind.* It is your birth place, and the place of your fathers sepulchres; it hath long been the city of the great King,
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the holy mountain, and the residence of the living God, where the Almighty has long put his name. And to this you are encouraged by ancient prophecy. *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, &c. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall be he, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Psalm cxxxviii. 5, 6. 8.*

It is to Jerusalem, and to the temple there, that Solomon in his prayer directs your eyes to look for help. *If thy people go out to battle against their enemy whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the Lord toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for thy name: then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. 1 Kings viii. 44, 45.* Therefore let Jerusalem come into your mind.

Jerusalem is to be built again, and the temple also; and is to be once more the residence of the Lord of hosts. Cyrus is to build the city, and to found the temple; and he is to let you go free, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts by his former prophets.

It is to Jerusalem that the promised Messiah is to come; into that city he is to ride, having salvation, meek and lowly, riding upon an ass, and upon a

colt, the sole of an ass—therefore *let Jerusalem come into your mind.*

God will choose Jerusalem again, and take up his abode there, and dwell there, until the desire of all nations shall come. It is in that city that an end is to be made of sin, and reconciliation for iniquity, everlasting righteousness shall be brought in, the Most Holy shall be anointed, and the Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself—therefore *let Jerusalem come into your mind.*

But again, it is from Jerusalem that salvation is to go into all lands : the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. In Bethlehem our hope is to be born, in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali he is to shine, to Jerusalem he is to come having salvation, in the second temple he is to appear in person, in his days Jerusalem is to dwell in safety, and Israel is to be saved ; *and this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.* Therefore *let Jerusalem come into your mind.*

Remember what hath been done there, what is promised to you at your return thither, and the wonderful works that are yet to be accomplished in that city, and the salvation which is to go from thence, even to the ends of the earth. Therefore I exhort you *to let Jerusalem come into your mind.*

Having gone briefly through the historical and prophetical part of my text, I shall now endeavour
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to go over these heads again, and to compare some things in their case *with ours*, and to offer you what I have in view in the language of the New Testament.

I have shewn you that this long and tedious captivity was some hundreds of years before predicted by Moses, David, and Isaiah; and often mentioned, especially by the psalmist, in the past tense, which was to shew that it had long since passed in the court of heaven, and therefore was as sure to come upon them as the decree of heaven is sure: and so is this present calamity of ours foretold also. *And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time.* Dan. xii. 1. The New Testament speaks the same language; it is universal, and is spoken by way of threatening to all those who profess the name of Christ. *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.* (This is Jezebel, or the whore of Babylon.) *Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.* Rev. ii. 21—23. In this passage a time is offered to Jezebel to repent; but to no effect. She repented not, nor ever confessed her abominations to God, but persisted in them; for which she is threatened with a bed of languishing

and pining sickness, and there she lies now. The kings of the earth who espouse her cause, encourage it, and profess it, Christ will cast them into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds; and all such as go over to her, or become her converts, shall be destroyed; *I will kill her children with death.* The next thing mentioned, is a trial upon all the churches; and in this Christ will make himself known as the omniscient God; *all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts;* and he will reward both saint and hypocrite, *and I will give to every one of you according to your works.*

Nebuchadnezzar's monarchical statue, or the great image presented to him in his dream, and Daniel's interpretation of it, are well known. At each end of this image a heavy trial falls upon the church of Christ. The empire which began in Nimrod rose to the height of its splendour under Nebuchadnezzar; *he was the head of gold.* And under this golden head the fiery trial, of which my text speaks, fell upon the Jews; and under *the ten toes of the image, which are part of iron and part of clay,* and which are explained to be ten kings; under these kings this universal trial befalls all the churches.

Moreover, from the time that this trial came upon the Jews, to the expiration of the reign of the golden head, was about seventy years; and from the beginning of the next fiery trial which befalls the New Testament churches, to the destruction of the *great whore,*

whore, called Mystical Babylon, will be the same date. According to the teaching which I am now under, and according to what I see, and what I really believe; yea, I have not a doubt but that whoever lives to see it, and compare the one with the other, will find this to be true.

Furthermore, the former trial under the *golden bead* was universal; *Jeremiah was ordained a prophet of the nations*. He was to give the cup of the Lord to all nations: *For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand; and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad; because of the sword that I will send among them.* Jer. xxv. 15, 16. And the trial which befalls the nations, under the *ten toes*, or *ten kings*, shall be as universal as that was; for it shall reach to all those who have drank of the wine cup of the whore's fornication. Rev. xvii. 4. And as *all nations have been drunk with the wine of her fornication* (Rev. xviii. 3), so all these nations and kings, over whom that great city hath reigned, shall be cast into great tribulation; *for this hour of temptation shall come upon all the world to try them.* Rev. iii. 10. But my business lies with the people of God, and therefore I shall bring in no more of the calamities that are threatened to the nations at large, than what is needful to help me in the things I have in view.

The trial that I am about to treat of, is called a *temptation*; which word doth not always mean the evil

evil suggestions of Satan, or the enticements and allurements which he makes use of to draw people into sin, but it often means the trials that God brings his people into, and the tests that he puts them to : *and the Lord did tempt Abraham.* Abraham might have some godly jealousies and suspicions of his own heart, whether he did not indulge too inordinate an affection for this long-looked-for and much expected heir of promise ; and therefore God tempted and tried him, not to evil, nor with evil, for in this sense God tempteth no man ; every man that is tempted in this way, is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Nor did God tempt Abraham that he might know what Abraham's faith and heart was, for God could not be ignorant of these things ; but God intended that Abraham should know his own integrity and the power of that grace that God had put into him. Moreover it is called a temptation on various accounts.

First, because he is ordered to do that which is contrary to reason, to nature, and to all laws, human and divine, and that was, to murder his own child, without any crime laid to his charge, or without doing any thing worthy of death or of bonds.

2dly, He was ordered to do what God never intended he should do ; and this taught Abraham this lesson, that God accepts the will for the deed—*If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted ; and God received Isaac in a figure, or as figurative of a better sacrifice.*

3dly,

gdly, This temptation tried Abraham forely in this: it was in Abraham, and in his seed, that the nations of the earth were to be blessed; in Isaac the covenant was to be established, and the seed of Isaac was to be as innumerable as the stars of heaven. But how was this to come about if Isaac was to be no more? *Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.* Heb, xi, 12.

And, lastly, this trial was to let Abraham know the power of grace in his own heart; for Abraham obeyed, and went at God's command, and was determined to slay his son, rather than keep him as a rival to God. This proved to Abraham that grace reigned, and that God was supreme in his affections: hence the great encomiums; *By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice,* Gen. xxii. Now this is called a temptation.

Again. The very heavy trial of the children of Israel in Egypt is called the same. Moses and Aaron gather the elders of Israel together, and inform them of the appearance of God to them, and of their being sent to deliver them from their yoke of bondage: but, instead of a speedy deliverance, as they expected, a yoke ten times heavier comes on them.

them. Task-masters are appointed over them; a double tale of bricks is demanded, no straw is allowed, and the old men are beaten, because they cannot perform impossibilities. This embitters their souls, insomuch that they rebel against Moses and Aaron. *And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in their way as they came forth from Pharaoh; and they said unto them, The Lord look upon you, and judge: because you have made our favour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hands to slay us.* Exod. v. 20, 21.

The fiery trial at the Red Sea, and the following one, of going three days 'in' the wilderness without water, and 'that of the want of food till the manna fell; the judgments that befell the rebellious, which at times endangered the lives of the whole multitude, and the terrible majesty of God at the giving of the law, which was such as none before ever heard and saw, and yet lived; are all called temptations. *Hath God ever assayed to go and take him a nation, from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did before your eyes?* Deut. iv. 34.

Moreover, these temptations fell upon Pharaoh and upon all the Egyptians; for Moses was confronted by the magicians. Every time Pharaoh and his servants hearkened to Moses, and submitted themselves,

themselves, there was respite; and every time they hearkened to the magicians, and rebelled, then the judgments came on. When God sent hail and fire to destroy all that were in the field, both man and beast, all the Egyptians that feared the Lord took their cattle and servants home, and saved them; but those who abode by the magicians, and feared not God, left them in the field, and they all perished.

Evil angels also were sent among them; these, by the magicians, influenced and pushed on Pharaoh and his people, till Egypt was destroyed, the first-born slain, and Pharaoh and all his host drowned in the Red Sea. All these were temptations upon the Egyptians; they rebelled against God, and God gave them up to believe lies, that they might justly be damned, for shutting their eyes against all the displays of his almighty power, and for rebelling against the word and counsel of the Most High. All these are called temptations. Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land. The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs and those great miracles. Deut. xxix. 23.

The subject now in hand was similar to this. The first command is given to God's own professing people, which is, that the king of Babylon (says God) is my servant; and every Israelite that falls away to the Chaldeans shall live, and have his life for a prey, and they shall go forth into captivity for their good, and God promised he would be a little sanctuary

sanctuary to them. The next command is to all nations; and this command was to be sent to all foreign princes by their servants, the ambassadors that came to the court at Jerusalem. *Thus saith the Lord to me, Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem, unto Zedekiah king of Judah. And command them to say to their masters, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, thus shall ye say to your masters, I have made the earth, the man and beast that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my out-stretched arm, and I have given it to whom it seemed meet unto me. And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beast of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kingdoms shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom that will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish saith the Lord, with the sword, and with famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. Jer. xxvii. 2—8.*

This is the command of God by his servant Jeremiah, whom he had ordained a prophet to the nations:

tions : and such times of trouble are God's temptations, trials, and touchstones, by which he puts men to the test ; and that which makes it so is, the devil stirring up rebellious sinners to counteract and to try to resist the will of God, and lead men to rebel against it. This was the case in Egypt ; Moses and Aaron are sent to declare the will of God, and Satan sent Jannes and Jambres to oppose them : and though the magicians and their folly were manifested, and they were obliged to acknowledge *the finger of God* ; and although they could not stand before Moses, for *the plague of the boil was upon the magicians*, yet they pushed Pharaoh on, till I (saith God) *made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell.* Ezek. xxxi. 16.

In Jerusalem's trial the devil acted the same part. Jeremiah declares the will of God to the children of Judah, that they should serve the king of Babylon seventy years ; many false prophets rise up against him, and Hananiah at the head of them ; *and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the Lord, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without inhabitants ? And all the people were gathered together against Jeremiah in the house of the Lord.* Ch. xxxvi. Whatever God said by his prophet, these false prophets contradicted. Jeremiah prophesied that the sword of the king of Babylon and the famine shall come ; the false prophets declared, *Ye shall*

shall not see sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place: but, says God, by sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. Jeremiah assures them of a seventy years captivity; Hananiah, after some of them went forth, promises their safe return within two years: and these prophets led the people to trust in a lie; and by such false prophets they were encouraged to endure the terrible siege, and to defend themselves to the last extremity: and though they had seen the threatened destruction of Hananiah, yet they went on; and all this time they fought against God himself, till by sword, famine, and pestilence, they and their false prophets all perished together.

Those who at first obeyed the voice of the Lord and fell away to the Chaldeans, and were gone to Babylon, met with the promised blessing of God's being with them there; and found that Ezekiel was raised up of God to teach and instruct them in Babylon: yet the devil had not done with them, for he raised up some of his own tools to withstand that prophet, and these had seduced not a few. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Let not your prophets and your diviners that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely unto you in my name; I have not sent them, saith the Lord. For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished in Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word towards you, in causing you to return to this place.*

place. For my thoughts toward you are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. Because ye have said, The Lord hath raised us up prophets in Babylon. Jer. xxix. 8—11.

The work of these wicked men in Babylon was, to blame those who had fell away to the Chaldeans, and who had submitted themselves to the yoke of this captivity; and they likewise wrote into Jewry, to encourage them who maintained the siege in Jerusalem; to whom God by his prophet replies, *Know that thus saith the Lord of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwell in this city, and of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity; thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. And I will persecute them with the sword, and with famine, and with pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach among all the nations whither I have driven them: because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the Lord, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets. Jer. xxix. 16—19.*

Of these desperate rebellious wretches there were three raised up by the devil in Babylon, who appeared at the head of all the rest, namely, Shemaiah,

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Zedekiah,

Zedekiah, and Ahab. The first of these writes a letter to all that dwelt in Jerusalem, and to the priest, against Jeremiah the prophet, in the following manner : *To Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, The Lord hath made thee priest in the stead of Jeboiada the priest, that ye should be officers in the house of the Lord, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him in prison, and in the stocks : now therefore, why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you ? for therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This captivity is long, build ye houses and dwell in them, and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them, &c. &c. Jer. xxix.*

To these three men God orders his prophet to send the following message : *Therefore, thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nebelamite and his seed : he shall not have a man to dwell among this people, neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the Lord, because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord.* And to the other two false prophets God sent the following awful sentence : *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name ; behold I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall slay them before your eyes. And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah, which are in Babylon, saying, The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, and like Ahab, whom*
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the king of Babylon roasted in the fire ; because they have committed villainy in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded, even I know, and am a witness, saith the Lord. Jer. xxix. 21—23. These were false prophets among God's own professing people, whose whole work was to destroy the unwary, seduce the weak, and encourage rebellion against the Lord.

And now, if we look into the heathen nations, which God hath ordered to submit to the yoke of the king of Babylon, upon these conditions, that those who obeyed his voice should enjoy their lands, and those who did not should be pursued by the sword, famine, and pestilence, till they were consumed by his hand : and among them we shall find another sort of rabble raised up by the devil to seek their ruin. Hence the caution that God sends them, to guard them against their hour of temptation : *Therefore hearken not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon ; for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land, and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish. But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him ; those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord, and they shall till it, and dwell therein.* Jer. xxvii. 9—11. And now we will come nigher home.

The scriptures threaten us with a time of trouble as well as they ; and this trying time is not only foretold, but it is felt at this present hour by many : *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time : and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.* Dan. xii. 1. Take notice here of the strangeness of this time of trouble—it is such as never was since there hath been a nation upon the earth : nor will all the annals of time furnish us with an account of such a time as the present time. But in this time of trouble—the Prince of Peace shall stand up—and shall appear in the behalf of his people, who is their mediator and deliverer, and he will display his power in behalf of his own elect. *Thy people shall be delivered*—Daniel's people are the people of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, as it follows, *they shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book ;* that is, every one whose name is found written in the book of life.

Again. This time of trouble is alluded to in the Revelation by John ; *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Rev. iii. 10.—Daniel's time of trouble is here called an hour of temptation ; and as the elect are to be delivered by Michael,

chael, here Christ says, *I will keep them* (from being taken and destroyed) *in this hour of temptation*; even those that keep the word of my patience. Once more. *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.* Rev. iii. 2, 3. Both these passages of scripture mean one and the same time of trouble, called an *hour*: those that keep the word of his patience, he will keep from this hour of temptation; but those that do not repent, and remember how they have received and heard, those that do not hold fast, nor watch, he will come on them as a thief, and they shall be so much taken up with other things, that they shall not know what hour he will come upon them: and this is exactly the case with thousands in our day. But it may be objected, the church that is exhorted to watchfulness is the church of Sardis, but that which is to be kept from the hour of temptation is the church of Philadelphia. To which I answer, the interval is not long between the setting and rising of the sun. The shadows of the evening have been long stretched out over us, and we are got far into night and into darkness; but there is a glorious day before us, and what is said to us in the night, vibrates in their ears who are to rise in the dawn of

the following morning; the seed, or the young daughter of the present church, will be the mother of the next. The darkest hour that this church will come to, will be that in which the witnesses will be slain; then this present dark state of the church passes away, and the brighter succeeds. But many of the same witnesses, which will be figuratively slain in that night, will, after three days and a half, rise again, in the morning of the next church state, and go on with their usual work as soon as the Holy Spirit raises them up again. (Read Rev. xi. 7—11.) But to proceed with the parallel.

What was God's declaration to the heathen nations? Why, it was this: I have made the earth by my power, and I have given it to whom it seemed meet to me to give it; and I have given all these nations into the hand of the king of Babylon my servant, to serve him, and they shall serve him and his son, and his son's son; and I have given him the beasts of the field also: and the nations that serve him shall stand, and they that do not shall be destroyed by his hand. This time of trial was a lively type of ours.

And what was God's command to his own professing people? Why this: he that falls away to the Chaldeans shall have his life for a prey, and I will set mine eyes and my heart upon him for good, and he shall live and return again; but them that will not put their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, they shall be pursued by the sword, by
famine,

famine, and by pestilence ; they shall be for an astonishment, a hissing, and a curse.

And now, what is the declarative will of God to us, upon whom this second trying hour is come ? Just the same as it was to them. *By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.* Prov. viii. 15, 16. This is the revealed will of God to us, that there is not a king that reigns, a prince, noble, or judge, that rules in all the earth, as civil magistrates, but what reign and rule by him.

And what is his command, his watchword, and his warning, to us ? Just the same as it was to the Jews of old. *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* Rom. xiii. 1, 2. This warning to us under the present time of trial (by Paul), is exactly the same as that by the prophet Jeremiah. All nations, says God, shall serve the king of Babylon ; let every soul be subject to the higher powers. I have given all these nations into the hand of my servant the king of Babylon : the powers that be are ordained of God. He that did not submit his neck to the yoke of the king of Babylon, adhered to a lie, and was seduced and ruined as a rebel against God : he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. The rebels were delivered up of God *to be*

a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither God drove them. Jer. xxiv. 9. Yea, says God, I will make this city a curse to all the nations of the earth. Jer. xxvi. 6. These rebels were cursed according to the law; and those that resist shall receive to themselves damnation according to the gospel. Those that obeyed the Lord's voice by the prophet, lived, and he promised them, saying, Surely I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the day of evil: and his word and promise to us is, rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil: do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he is the minister of God to thee for good. Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

But that which made it a sore trial in the days of old was, the cursed work of *the ministers of Satan*. The magicians pushed Pharaoh and all his host to destruction. Among the nations, dreamers, diviners, and enchanters, drove many of them upon the thick bosses of God's buckler. And among the Jews lying prophets brought thousands to perish by sword and famine, who were cut off with a lie in their right hand, in the very act of rebellion, and under the curse of God; and so it is now. Among the nations there is that self-deifier, that enchanter, that hath bewitched and destroyed thousands; I mean *Tom Paine*; who not only opposes the servants of the Lord, as the false prophets did in the days of old, but ridicules and blasphemes both God and the Bible. No wonder that he ridicules

ridicules the powers on earth, *when he hath set his mouth against the heavens, and his tongue walks through the earth.* Psalm lxxiii. 9. And this monster in human shape hath not a few proselytes in his bonds of iniquity : and those who die holden in these cords of their sins, *shall receive to themselves damnation*, saith our great apostle. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* Rom. xiii. 5. Ye must needs be subject not only through fear of wrath, but ye must be subject to those civil powers that are of God, or you cannot *keep a conscience void of offence toward God.* Tom Paine was aware of this, and therefore was under the necessity of ridiculing, blaspheming, and exploding the Bible, and all the light of divine revelation, in order to make room for the Age of Reason, or for the age in which deified reason is exalted. However, this is not a new god, or a god newly come up ; this high thing, this vain imagination, was brought forth, and set in opposition to the King of Jacob in Isaiah's days. Isa. xli. 21. This same god was brought forth "by Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire."

Thus the nations now are furnished with an enchanter, as in the days of old. And if we come nearer home, we shall find false prophets among us, as the Jews had among them.

Mr. Brothers has told us what he is, and what he was appointed to do ; what calamities were coming upon us ; and, like Bar Co-cab, the false messiah,

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he was going to take both Jews, and as many Gentiles as pleased to follow him, to the Holy Land. Great numbers were assembling, others letting their business, or retiring from it, getting their property together, to be ready at an hour's warning; and some have been, in their own imaginations, as far as the island of Cyprus; but though they have been often thus absent from us in spirit, yet their bodies, or their sepulchres, are with us to this day. Not a few hypocrites had their beards shorn, *and their beels made bare*, by this artificer. Jer. xiii. 22.

After this bustle of Bar Co-cab was a little abated, the devil raised up another, a mere boy; this seems to have been one that was a lunatic from the cradle, for a strange spirit hath often taken him. This Thudas came forth to perform greater things than those of Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing; he was to convert the Jews before there is the least appearance or sign of the fulness of the Gentiles coming in. But did any of the rulers or the Pharisees, among the Jews, believe on either of these men? No; they suspected the cheat, they had been too often bit by the devil before, and therefore proceeded with caution. However, many of the Gentiles received them, as they came in their own name (for they never favoured of any other), especially the latter; for he was a very young man, his word was attended with great power among the ladies. A little like a former exhibition in Shiloh, when four hundred Benjamites caught four hundred

hundred of the dancing daughters of Shiloh in one night. Judges xxi. 21. This was casting the net on the right side of the ship with a witness, and this late conversion of the Jews ended somewhat in the same way in appearance; only with this difference—the struggle with the Benjamites was, who should catch the dancing ladies; but the scuffle among our dancing girls was, who should catch the Benjamite. However time and effects, as well as their own presumption, hath shewn us that none but the devil sent both these.

We may come a little nigher home yet. Not a few of various denominations, yea among the dignified and among the decent, are nothing else but false prophets; yea, the nation swarms with them, *and who are not at all afraid to speak evil of dignities*; their looks and words both tell you that *they neither fear God, nor honour the king*. These help forward the calamity; they preach rebellion against the Lord, and are the snares and traps of Satan in this hour of temptation; and so it will appear in the end, whoever lives to see it. For if those who resist the civil powers shall receive to themselves damnation, for this is the threatening of God in this hour of temptation, then what can become of the proselytes of those men who enforce and encourage little else, and whose proselytes breathe out such malice, revenge, blood, and slaughter? What spirit is this? Why, the same that influenced the high-priest and people of the Jews against Christ. And what spirit

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was that ? The Saviour tells them, *this is your bōur, and the power of darknes.* Luke xxii. 53. Wherever this spirit dwells, there the devil reigns. *If ye were the children of Abraham (as all believers are), ye would do the works of Abraham ; that is, they would obey the Saviour's voice, keep his word, and love his name. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father: for ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.* John viii. In this passage Christ excludes all the spiritual children of Abraham from these works of darknes. *I tell you the truth (says Christ), and ye believe me not.* They rejected the word of the Lord, and trusted in a lie, and sought to kill the Lord of life ; and such are of their father the devil, for no lie is of the truth, no liar enters the heavenly Jerusalem ; and he that is angry with his brother without a cause, is a murderer ; and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Why are the higher powers hated ? Why ; because they are the higher powers. Who made them so ? Why, God. Then he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinances of God, and fights against him, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

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The next thing, in the ancient story of the Jews, which I shall consider is, that most dreadful sin of perjury, which at that time was one of their leading national crimes. God orders the Jews, by Jeremiah, to proclaim deliverance to every bond-man and bond-maid among them that were Jews, according to the law of release, which was to be proclaimed on the year of jubilee; and at this time the king of Babylon's army was against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah. This they obeyed; they made a covenant in the house of God, and confirmed it by cutting a calf in twain, and passing between the two parts of it, and let their Hebrew servants go free, and, I think, they swore to it; for they are charged with swearing falsely, *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, —and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name? &c.* Jer. vii. 9, 10. When they had set their servants at liberty, the Chaldeans went away and left the city; and as soon as this was done, they returned and took all their servants back again into bondage.

The king likewise had perjured himself; for when the king of Babylon set him on the throne, he swore allegiance to him, but afterwards rebelled, and hired the forces of Egypt to assist him. Hence the heavy charge—*But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the*

the covenant, and be delivered ? As I live, saith the Lord, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king; whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Neither shall Pharaoh, with his mighty army, make for him in the war. Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. Ezek. xvii. 15—18. False swearing seems to be the crying crime of their nation ; and the same is the leading crime of ours, in this hour of temptation which is come upon us. No small number among us, who have taken oaths to be true and faithful to our present sovereign, are now most false, unfaithful to him, and filled with a spirit of rebellion against him ; this is exactly the same crime as that of the Jews of old.

Our oaths are as follow.—The oath of allegiance runs thus :

“ I do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful, and bear true allegiance to his majesty King George. So help me God.”—The oath of supremacy thus :

“ I do swear, that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position, that princes, excommunicated or deprived by the pope, or any authority of the see of Rome, may be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever. And I do declare, that no foreign prince, person,

person, prelate, state, or potentate, hath, or ought to have, pre-eminence or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. So help me God."

The oath of abjuration is after the following manner:

" I do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, and declare; in my conscience, before God and the world, that our sovereign lord King George is lawful and rightful king of this realm, and all other his majesty's dominions thereunto belonging. And I do solemnly and sincerely declare, that I do believe, in my conscience, that not any of the descendants of the person who pretended to be Prince of Wales during the life of the late King James the Second, and since his decease pretended to be, and took upon himself the stile and title of King of England, by the name of King James the Third; or of Scotland, by the name of James the Eighth; or the stile and title of King of Great Britain; hath any right or title whatsoever to the crown of this realm, or any other of the dominions thereunto belonging. And I do renounce, refuse, and abjure, any allegiance or obedience to any of them. And I do swear, that I will bear faith and true allegiance to his majesty king George, and him I will defend to the utmost of my power, against all traitorous conspiracies and attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against his person, crown, and dignity. And I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to his majesty,
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and his successors, all treason and traitorous conspiracies which I shall know to be against him, or any of them. And do faithfully promise, to the utmost of my power, to support, maintain, and defend, the succession of the crown against the descendants of the said James, and against all other persons whatsoever; which succession, by an act, entitled, 'An Act for the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject;' is, and stands, limited to the Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants. And all these things I plainly and sincerely acknowledge and swear, according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain and common sense and understanding of the same words; without any equivocation, mental evasions, or secret reservation whatsoever. And I do make this recognition, acknowledgment, abjuration, renunciation, and promise, heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true faith of a Christian. So help me God."

How many great men in high office and places of trust; how many officers in the army and navy; how many ministers in the churches and meetings; how many parish officers and officers of excise; how many foldiers and sailors, &c. &c. in the present hour of temptation, and according to the spirit that is at this time gone forth in the world, lie
involved

involved in this guilt of perjury, and detained in the chains of their sins, as rebels against the throne of heaven.

But what is an oath? Many make very light of it, and tell you they take a glass afterward, and swallow it down: that is easily done, because of the assistance of Satan, who is always present at the taking of a false oath, as he is with a self murderer, to lend a hand; and the reason of Satan's presence is, because God is not in all their thoughts. But although an oath is easily swallowed down, it is not so easily purged off. An oath was a light thing with Esau; he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and *swore by God* at the sale of it. Parting with his birthright was despising regeneration and God's predestination to the adoption of sons; and when he found that the birthright and the blessing were inseparable, he changed his mind, and would have willingly been perjured, if God, who was called in as a witness at the sale, would but have connived at his sin, and proved false to the purchaser: but he found no place of repentance in the immutability, faithfulness, and truth of God; no, nor yet in the bowels of his long-suffering mercy, nor in his eternal love in the Messiah—and there is no other place where real repentance can work, flow out, or be drawn forth, but in these.

There must be something very dreadful in a false oath, or God would never have dealt so hardly with Zedekiah, who swore falsely to the king of Babylon.

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He was of the royal house of David, and king over the people of God, and tried to the utmost to escape the vengeance of the Chaldeans; he fled by the way of the plain, and many of his body guards stuck to him, till the Chaldeans pursued him; they took and brought him to Riblah; all his wives, concubines, princesses, and ladies of honour, were brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes; all his children were slain before his face, and afterward his own eyes were put out, and he was bound in chains, and carried to Babylon, where he died; and all this was no more than what was foretold him by God, who spoke by his prophet Jeremiah.

An oath is for confirmation, and to put an end to all strife; for by it a man appeals to the high court of heaven, and calls upon the faithful and true Witnesses to bear testimony to the truth and integrity of his heart; and the other party, or parties, are to be contented with this, knowing that if he swears truly, his righteousness, which he vindicates in this his appeal, shall be brought forth as the light, and his just dealings as the noon day; but if falsely, that his sentence shall be more just, and the execution of it more dreadful, than can be pronounced or executed by all the courts of nations, because it will be inflicted on the soul as well as the body.

An oath is going the farthest step that a man can go in assuring another of the truth and sincerity of his heart. It is a laying one's own soul,
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and the salvation of it, as a pledge to a friend before God, and in his name affirming the truth we advance, at the expence of it.

Holding the Bible in our hand, implies that we hold the truth therein contained as our rule of faith and practice ; kissing the book, signifies our cordial embracing the things therein revealed ; and calling upon God to help, is imploring his strength in our behalf, to enable us still to hold fast and embrace the things that make for our peace, and that we will forfeit all right and all claim upon God, his word, his providence, and his grace, his mercies, and his blessings, which are contained in his word, if we call upon his sacred name to bear witness to a known and wilful lie.

He that takes the oath of allegiance to a prince, must yield obedience to him ; *I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.* Eccl. viii. 2. Some talk of a compulsive oath—no man can compel me to challenge the perfections of God, either to cover a lie or to defy him to avenge it. It is said of the king of Judah, that the king of Babylon made him swear ; but God, who is not mocked, gave him up to hardness of heart as soon as he had violated his oath. *Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord. And he also rebelled*

against the king of Babylon, who had made him swear by God : but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning to the Lord God of Israel. 2 Chron. xxxvi.

11—13.

Perjury and rebellion against the higher powers are the two principal snares and traps of Satan, in which he catches and entangles thousands. In this *hour of temptation* these are the sins which the tempter lays at poor sinners doors ; and when either of these are admitted in, they pave the way for Satan himself to come into the heart. The devil was the first murderer ; and when he takes possession, he keeps revenge, malice, blood, and slaughter, boiling up in the heart, as he did in the heart of Cain : and sure I am, that no power under heaven can cast this spirit out, but that of God himself. Tom Paine was involved in the guilt of perjury before he wrote, for he had been an officer in the excise ; and when he had broke through his oath, he soon breathed forth his rebellion against the higher powers ; and since that against God himself.

But in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence ; and his children shall have a place of refuge. The obedient Jews found God a little sanctuary in Babylon. The nations at large, who obeyed the voice of God, kept their own lands, and were under the protection of Providence, when thousands of the others perished : and though some few of the Jews might gain settlements in Babylon and elsewhere, and being not suffered to return with the rest of the Jews at their
return

return from captivity, might think themselves safe and secure enough, but not so, for seventy years after their going forth, God sent his curse after them, which was to dwell with them till their very houses were consumed by it. *Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold, a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll, the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth, shall be cut off as on this side, according to it: and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side, according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof. Zech. v. 1—4.* This flying roll contained the same with that which Zedekiah burnt. The prophet was ordered to write another; and this part of the roll, that fled to Babylon, contained the curses denounced against the rebels: *there is no going from God's Spirit; there is no fleeing from his presence.*

Nor is our nation the only one that is plunged into this guilt of perjury. I have no doubt but the greater part of those who brought the French king to the block were those who had sworn true allegiance to him: this may be read in the judgment that overtook them. Yea, the whole Roman em-

pire seems to be infected with this present prevailing sin of nations ; and it must be so ; *for this hour of temptation shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Rev. iii. 10. Wherever this spirit of disaffection runs, thither the temptation goes ; and Satan will ply them the hardest with it, who have bound themselves to their sovereigns with the most sacred oaths.

And any watchful eye may see the wrath of God pursue the false swearers. Two persons, if I forget not, called ministers of God, who had taken the above oaths, are gone to Botany-bay : one, if not more, are, or have been, confined in gaols ; and how many of the perjured sailors came to an ignominious death, I cannot tell ; but two of them, if report be true, confessed before their awful exit that their first step to ruin was reading Tom Paine's books : in these, Paine's sins are open beforehand, and gone before him to judgment ; and those who stole away the king's frigate, and murdered their officers, and then carried her into one of the ports of Spain, will not escape the justice of God.

I believe the time of the Jews' temptation lasted some years, from the rumours of the war to the taking of the city ; and nodoubt but this was done, that all who feared God might escape ; *for he is long suffering to us ward.* And this of ours, which is a reacting of that, hath continued a good while, and no doubt for the same purpose ; for many who, I believe, fear God, are at this time entangled in

Satan's snare, who must come out of it; *for they must be kept from this hour of temptation* (or from being ruined by it) *who keep the word of his patience.* I have known some pious souls who, by the infernal diligence of unfeeling men, have been sadly stiffened in the neck by Satan, as well as Zezekiah; but God hath convinced them of their error, and undeceived them, and their souls have smarted sorely for their madness. One of these is a gentleman of the faculty, now living at Woolwich. These have escaped the snare of the fowler, and so it must be; *for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.* Eccl. vii. 18. God's command to us is, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.* His promise is, *Do good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.* Yea, and a good conscience: *Ye must be subject, for conscience sake.* This is our watchword in this hour of temptation. His threatening is, *They that resist, resist the ordinance of God, and shall receive to themselves damnation.* This is God's sentence and denunciation against the rebellious; and thus *I have given a portion to seven, and also to eight; for I know not what evil shall be upon the earth.* Eccl. xi. 2. Many warnings and cautions have I given you from this pulpit, when the devil sent forth one of his drummers to beat a march to the Holy Land; I told you it was a trick of the devil, which gave great offence to some, who soon after prepared for the journey; but they have been ashamed to show their heads since. When the great converter of the Jews fell down from the moon, I

told you he was nothing but a presumptuous impostor; and the expedition to convert the pagans was nothing else but one of Satan's rattles, intended to make a stir, and collect a crowd together, only to amuse them, and divert their minds from attending to the things that make for their peace. And when that great power, like Simon Magus, came among you from Plymouth, who had studied the art of moving the passions, I told you that the devil, and none but the devil, was in him: and in which of these assertions have I appeared a false prophet? Here I am; testify against me: but you cannot; nor shall you find me a false prophet in this matter.

Moreover, you have heard that God hath promised, that in every temptation he will, with the temptation, make a way for his people's escape, that they may be able to bear it. Israel escaped in Egypt, when Pharaoh and his host, who rebelled against God, were destroyed. Those that obeyed the voice of God, by Jeremiah, fled to Babylon, and found God, and several eminent prophets raised up there: Daniel was a minister of state; Mordecai in the house of Haman; Esther queen of the empire; and Ezra was the king's cup-bearer. The heathen nations, who yielded obedience to God, kept their kingdoms. Just before Jerusalem's last destruction, the watchwords went forth: *Behold, the judge standeth before the door; whereby we know it is the last times; wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* When the rumours of the Romish war went forth, the children of the day

day were upon the watch ; and when the army came into Judea, they fled to Pella ; and so it will be now. Let us consider what the Lord says to us ; for it is to us the following words are spoken : *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.* Be watchful, and see the frame and state thou art in ; take notice of the truths you hold, and hold fast, that you lose nothing. Observe God's judgments abroad in the earth, and what is coming on, and watch over each other, that ye be not carried away in this hour of temptation.

The next words imply that many are already turned aside after Satan, and that others were much infected ; hence the command, *Strengthen the things which remain*, which remain with you, and which are not carried away, and which *are ready to die.* These *things* are the vessels of mercy, which are staggered, stumbled, and weakened by the many that are led into rebellion, concluding they shall never bear up, and hold out, and halting between the word of God and the cry of thousands in a profession, ministers as well as people, and who are looked up to as men of great knowledge and wisdom ; but *their wisdom perverts them.* Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent. You have heard the doctrines of the everlasting gospel, and you have heard the will of God revealed to you, that you must be subject to the higher powers. This last part of the will of God many of you have relinquished and given up : and remember,

remember, that God is the author of that part of scripture as well as of all the rest ; and as Satan hath made such a successful attack upon you, he will not quit the field till he hath got the whole, for the whole is in danger : to deny any one part to be true, is to deny the whole, and make God a liar, for no lie is of the truth. Some professors are gone so far already, that when they are pressed hard upon this head, they are obliged to confess, " they do not believe the Bible." Hence the exhortation that Jesus by his angel sends to us, *Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast.*

But why are we so charged by the Lord to hold fast ? Because our safety lies in it. *Those that keep the word of his patience, he will keep* (from being carried away by Satan) *in this hour of temptation.* Rev. iii. 10. In the next place, those that fear God, and have been led astray by it, are exhorted to repent ; for this trap of the devil hardens the heart, and makes men vain, proud, and self-conceited. If you argue with them, and bring forth the will of God to them in his word, it makes no impression ; they bring forth their strong reasons against God himself : and sure I am, that nothing but evangelical repentance can save these from destruction, and set them down at the Saviour's feet to receive and obey his word. The devil, by the instrumentality of Tom Paine, having come down among us in great wrath, gives me some room to suspect, that he knows he hath but a short time, before that infernal head will be wounded

wounded over divers countries. Perhaps this temptation that is now abroad in the earth is something preparatory to what is yet to come. The long dispute between Michael and the devil, in the days of Jeremiah, was *to separate the vile from the precious*; and when this division was made, the sword of war determined the point, the rebels perished, and the righteous lived.

At that time the devil had got the army of the Jews on his side, as well as the king, the princes, the priests, and the false prophets. Hence you read, *that Jeremiab went forth to go into Benjamin; and when he was in the gate, the captain of the ward took him, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans: and the princes were wroth with him, and smote him, and put him in prison.* Jer. xxxvii. 15. Now this present hour of temptation is to make the same division. *And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: and I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.* Ezek. xx. 38. This same work is now going on in our barn floor; the chaff from the wheat is separating, carnal professors and hypocrites, the devil is gathering them together, by Tom Paine's books, and our false prophets; and in the bond of iniquity he holds them fast, while those who do know their God cleave to him, to his servants, and to his word, in the bond of love. And something, which perhaps is yet to come, will determine
this

this branch of the controversy of Zion ; for not the rebels, nor the wicked who join hand in hand, shall escape, but *those who keep the word of his patience, in the love of it ;* and this part of it in particular, *be subject to the higher powers : these he will keep (from being carried away) in this hour of temptation.* Hence the following condition, spoken by way of threatening ; *If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.* Rev. iii. 3. These words plainly imply, that those who are obedient, believe his word, and watch his hand ; and his judgments which are abroad in the earth, shall have timely notice, and know, in due time, when he comes, and what he means to do, so as to escape ; *for he will reveal his secrets to his servants the prophets.* But those professors, who are led away by the devil into this damnable delusion, will be given up to blindness of mind, insensibility, and hardness of heart ; their heads will be stuffed with politics, their hearts with malice and murder, and all their hopes and expectations will be upon anarchy. To these, saith Christ, *will I come as a thief (in the night), and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.* Those who shall escape this perilous hour are pointed out in the following verse : *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.* Rev. iii. 4. These were not polluted with adultery or fornication, neither with perjury, rebellion, damnable heresy, nor superstition ;

superstition ; and these shall still walk with Christ, when many shall fall off ; and walk in white, when many are defiled and polluted ; and shall be counted worthy, when the hypocrites' hope shall perish, and their trust shall be in a spider's web.

I shall now consider over again the watchword in my text, *Go away, stand not still*. They knew before where they were to go to, and what they were to meet with when they went ; and now an opportunity offered for their escape, and therefore he gives the watchword, and enforces it, *Go away, stand not still*. This strange work will be brought to pass again, when the most perilous time, the hottest hour comes on, which, perhaps, may be very violent, but very short : and as then, so now, Christ will be a strength to the needy in his distress, should the blast of the terrible ones send a storm to the wall. Christ is a hiding-place himself, and he will provide a retreat for those who obey his voice in this degenerate age. *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee, bide thyself as it were for a moment, till the indignation be overpast*. God revealed his secret to Jeremiah, and he gave the watchword to all that attended him, cleaved to him, and obeyed the voice of the Lord by him. And so it will be again, when the righteous are fixed in the truth, and the rebels ripe for destruction. The servants of the Lord will have timely intimation ; and those that obey the voice of the Lord, and cleave to him, and hold fast his word,

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will take the warning, and embrace the shelter, and none else ; for those that are in Satan's trap are filled with such desperate malice and madness against every minister of the word, and against every child of God who dares to oppose or advance truth against their rebellious spirits, that they are like atheists, they will take no warning, nor give credit to any thing that shall be said. *The prophet is the snare of a fowler in all his ways ; the spiritual man is mad, because of thy great hatred.* These will be like Lot's sons-in-law ; they will laugh, and lay down, till the flames of eternal fire rouse them the second time ; or like king Zedekiah, who persisted in his rebellion till he saw the king of Babylon's princes in the gates of the city : then he fled ; but the vengeance of heaven soon overtook him. Even in the chapel there hath been some of this cast, who have made a wry mouth, grinned like a dog, and even gnashed their teeth, while I have been insisting upon these things, which I believe in my conscience to be true and right, and that it is my duty to enforce them. But if they can gnash their teeth in the house of God, what will they do in the pains of hell ? But they served Jeremiah worse than this, *for every one of them cursed him.* Jer. xv. 10. *They smote him.* Jer. xx. 2. Again and again (Jer. xxxvii. 15.) they imprisoned him ; they put him down into the dungeon, up to the neck in mud. They took counsel to slay him, but they could not beat the grace of God out of his heart, nor the truth of God out of his

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his mouth: what he said came to pass, and none of his words fell to the ground. *Go away, stand not still.*

Remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind. This was a hint that they should go as far off as Babylon; and it was a caution not to listen to every lo here, or lo there, or to give heed to any of the lies and carnal reasonings of the false prophets which the devil would raise up in Babylon; for all that Satan wants is to drive God out of all our thoughts, as God complains. *How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophecy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts, which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.* Jer. xxiii. 26, 27. This is the work of the devil now; almost every house has got a politician in it, or an *enchanter*, or a *charmer*; and this tool of Satan is the snare and curse of the whole family; his work is to fill their minds and entertain them with the wonderful productions of this *age of reason*, and to bring in the fresh contents of every opposition newspaper, that by these means every thought of their hearts may be alienated from God, and be kept in captivity to the obedience of Satan: hence the exhortation, *Remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.* For if I remember the Lord, I shall meditate on him, and on his wonderful works: and he will remember me,
and

and let me know it ; my thoughts shall often meet with his ; I shall be upon the watch, and be led to compare what I see with what I read ; and this will lead me to consider what safety or protection he hath promised to his people, or where they may be hid in the day of his fierce anger, and how to *prepare to meet our God* in the way of his judgment, lest by coming suddenly, he should find us sleeping.

And let Jerusalem come into your mind. Jerusalem had long been the throne of God, and the principal seat of the church ; the church at Jerusalem, or on mount Zion, was the metropolitan church among the twelve tribes of Israel. *God loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob* ; and it was revealed from heaven, that although he had, for the sins of his people, despised his habitation by casting it down to the ground, *and that he remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger* (Lam. ii. 1), yet he would choose Jerusalem again. It would once more be the city of the living God, where Immanuel would appear, and make reconciliation for the sins of all his people, which are scattered throughout the whole world. Hence the prediction of the Psalmist, *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning ; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy.* But the law is now gone forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem ; therefore we must look for Jerusalem, for the city of the great King, elsewhere. Coming to God the judge

judge of all under his teaching, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant by faith, and to the saints in heart-felt love and affection, is coming to the heavenly Jerusalem; for all believers *are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.*

To let Jerusalem come into our mind, in the language of the New Testament, is *to love one another*, to let the children of God have a place in our hearts and affections. And now to interweave their case with ours, the principal seat of the church of God, in this day is Great Britain; for I believe there is but very little of the power of godliness elsewhere; nor is there much of it here. I have heard much of the wonderful success of the gospel in America; but I have but little faith in these good tidings. I have had letters from various parts of that country, and from many other countries also, and from the East and West Indies; and they all complain to me of famine, and I believe it. Gospel Jerusalem is now with us, and Zion is God's resting-place for ever: here (saith he) will I dwell, for I have desired it: therefore seek we the peace of the city, and pray unto the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall we have peace. *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces; for my friends and companions sake will I now say, Peace be within thee; because of the house of the Lord my God I will seek thy good.* Blessed are those servants whom, when their Lord cometh, he shall find so doing; for they yet rule with God; and are faithful with the saints.

Some dream of a universal republic, as some former kings in France did of universal empire ; but we are as secure from that as the word of the immutable God can make us. At the division of the Roman empire into kingdoms, according to the prophecy of Daniel, ten kings rose up in it about one and the same time ; hence the empire is called a *beast*, and the ten kings the ten horns of the beast, which have all, more or less, in times past, pushed and fought in defence of the beast, and in defence of *popery* : and though this exact number ten hath not always been the same, but sometimes more and sometimes less, yet that was the number at the first division, and I believe it will be the same when God judges Babylon the great.

Some few years ago, if I conjecture right, there were eleven kings in the empire :—the king of Britain, of Denmark, of Sweden, of Poland, of Bohemia, of Prussia, of Naples, of Sardinia, of France, of Spain, and of Portugal ; and although France and Poland are now without kings, yet there remain nine still. Whether there be any other princes that are crowned heads in the empire, I know not ; but those above mentioned have borne the title of kings ; this is well known among us. The pope is not included in this list, for he is the little horn before whom three horns fell, and ever since the popes have worn a *triple crown*. For so it is written—*After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong*

strong exceedingly ; and it had great iron teeth : it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it : and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it ; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots : and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool : his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him : thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake : I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Dan. vii. Daniel, in this vision sees the Chaldean empire rolled round to Rome ; the Baby-

Ionian, the Median and Persian, and the Grecian, were, in vision, passed away.

He calls this *beast diverse from all the rest*, because of the ecclesiastical and civil power being interwoven together in the pope, the head of the beast, and because it had destroyed all the others. He sees the division of the empire into *ten kingdoms*; hence he says the beast had ~~ten~~ horns. Then he sees a *little horn* spring up among the ten; this is the pope, before whom three horns were plucked up: this alludes to the three countries conquered by Pepin and Charlemain, kings of France, who promoted the pope, and gave him these three countries for his patrimony, and on which account the popes of Rome have worn a triple crown ever since. The great words which this horn spake, alludes to the doctrine of devils, which the New Testament applies to him. At the head of this ten-horned beast he sits, and will till the Ancient of days comes, who is described in verse ninth. This coming of Christ is not to judge the quick and dead, but to take to himself his great power, and to reign universally in a spiritual way. The fiery stream attending him, will according to the New Testament, burn the great whore with fire. The thousands that minister unto him, are those that embrace his truth; and those who stand before him to be judged, are such as have killed his saints, and is therefore called judging the great whore, avenging
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the blood of his saints, and giving the murderers blood to drink. The books being opened, is intended to shew that he will proceed according to men's deserts, and execute he vengeance threatened, that his judgments may appear to be both righteous and true, which is what the living saints will applaud. His coming with the clouds of heaven, I understand of the invisible attendance of the ministering angels, together with the cloud of witnesses upon earth, which will attend him. Read, *and they heard a great voice from heaven, saying, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.* Rev. xi. 12. Daniel looks till the body of the beast was slain and given to the burning flame ; this is Paul's man of sin, the wicked one, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy by the brightness of his coming. And when this is done Babylon falls, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ ; and so Daniel says, *There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all nations should serve him.*

The latter part of the chapter explains the first. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth ; which are the Babylonian, the Median and Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even of that horn that had

eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, and whose looks were more stout than his fellows. This is the pope; for it follows—I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them. Which John describes thus: *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and overcome them, and kill them.* Rev. xi. 7. And this horn is to continue until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Dan. vii. 22. This beast with his ten horns shall continue till the witnesses shall be slain; and then the Saviour will appear; and then judgment will be given to the saints; the prayers of the souls at the foot of the altar will be fully answered—Christ will avenge their blood on those that dwell on the earth, and reward the great whore as she has rewarded the saints, and the cup that she hath given to others shall be filled to her double. And then shall come on the universal reign of Christ. And so it follows—*Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints*

of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time—which is 1260 years. And that is his time of duration, and the end of that date brings him to ruin; for the judgment shall (then) sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. Dan. vii. 23—26. And then comes on the fifth kingdom, which is the kingdom of Christ, and this shall be the greatest empire that ever was in the world; and so it follows—And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions (or rulers) shall serve and obey him. Hitherto is the end of the matter. Dan. vii. 27, 28. According to this prophecy, this beast and his ten horns are to continue till the universal reign of Christ. And when he comes, he will first destroy the beast, burn the whore with fire, avenge the blood of his saints, destroy them that destroy the earth, and set up his own kingdom, and all nations shall serve and obey him. Ezekiel is very clear upon this—he lived to see the overthrow of the Babylonian empire, when Belshazzar was slain, and Darius the Medean took the kingdom (Dan. v. 30, 31); and he tells us that there shall be three more overthrows, and then the rightful Heir of all things and of all kingdoms shall come. Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall

not be the same : exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it : and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is ; and I will give it him. Ezek, xxi. 26, 27.

It appears plain, from the word of God, that ten kings will be found in the Roman empire when Christ comes to set up his own spiritual and universal kingdom. This may be seen from the whole book of Daniel—the great image, or monarchical statue, shewed to Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, is plain upon this. The golden head was the Babylonian empire, and Nebuchadnezzar at the head of it ; the silver arms and breasts were the Median and Persian ; the belly and thighs of brass, was the Grecian ; the iron legs, the Roman ; the ten toes, the ten kings in it. The toes, part of iron and part of clay, shews that the kingdom should be partly strong and partly broken ; this is to be seen now. And their mingling the seed of men, is the family compacts ; and the intermarriages of one crowned head with another, to strengthen alliances ; but these shall not cleave together, even as iron is not mixed with miry clay (Dan. ii. 43) : this is now fulfilling plain enough, and may be seen between France and Spain, and between us and others. Now observe, in the next verse, these ten toes are called kings, and during their reign Christ comes ; for so it is written—*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not*

be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces, and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brassy, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter : and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. Dan. ii. 44, 45.

Thus it is plain that, during the existence of these ten toes, or during the reign of these ten kings, Christ's kingdom is to be set up, which is confirmed by John in his Revelation. Christ styles himself the prince of the kings of the earth; Rev. i. 15. John is shewn a dragon with ten horns, Rev. xii. 3. These ten horns are said to be ten kings, Rev. xvii. 12. *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet (that is, they had no kingdoms in John's time), but receive power as kings, one hour with the beast (that is, the pope and these ten kings shall receive their power as kings all together, at the same hour, or about one and the same time; they shall all rise up together). These kings have one mind (that is, are of one religion, they were to be all papists together, as in former times they all have been), and shall give their power and strength unto the beast; submit their power to him, and engage their strength in behalf of him and his religion, as all of them have done, more or less. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them : they have all in times past persecuted*

persecuted the saints, but the saints still continue. And now mind what follows : *For God hath put into their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled.* And then God will turn their hearts another way. *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.* Read Rev. xvii. This is the word of the Lord ; and as long as his word is true, so sure shall these kings and kingdoms stand, till Babylon is no more. Nor shall all the wisdom of this age of reason, falsely so called, ever make void one jot or tittle of God's word : for this age of reason is God's hour of temptation ; and the wisest men in their own conceit in this age are the fastest caught in the devil's trap : they aim at the destruction of all the higher powers, but God aims at the destruction of rebels. We are not persecuted for religion, nor yet for conscience sake. If any are buffeted, it is in strict justice, for their faults. Therefore, reader, cease to hear the instruction that causeth thee to err from the words and ways of wisdom. Pay no regard to any preacher, either in church or meeting, who kindles the flames of rebellion, and breathes out rage, malice, and slaughter, against the civil rulers of the earth ; for as sure as God communicates his spirit by the preaching of his gospel, so sure does the
 devil,

devil, that old rebel, traitor, and murderer, enter the hearts of men, by the reading of Tom Paine's books, and by the inflammatory discourses of such preachers. *They know not the thoughts of the Lord, nor do they understand his councils.*

Besides : what good can be expected from perjured men ? Men that can make oath to be true and faithful to their sovereign, and then rebel against him, are in the same awful state of Zedekiah and all his princes, his priests, and his false prophets. What ! can they swear in the presence of God that they will relinquish all claim upon the Bible, if they prove false or unfaithful ? and can they challenge the omniscience of Heaven to find out the cheat, and defy him to avenge it ? Can they bring themselves under every threatening, plague, and curse ; under all the wrath, judgments, and indignation of God, and under the damnation of hell, and then stand up and preach, and call themselves the servants of God ? The hand of God hath been seen upon some of these seducers already ; and so it is upon some who are, and have been, seduced by them. You may rage and rail, and curse me, as long as you please ; and you may send me a few more anonymous scraps of scurrility, rebukes, and blasphemy ; but I still tell you, that you shall not escape the judgment of God by these things : *they that Christ will keep from the hour of temptation, are those that keep the word of his patience.* This is his promise ; and we shall see whose word shall stand, yours or his. And why is it called

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the word of his patience? Because he exercised so much patience in the preaching of it, under one of the vilest kings that ever reigned, namely Herod, who slew all the infants in Bethlehem, in hopes of killing him, by whom kings reign; and when the next monarch came to the throne, his enemies cried in ridicule, *Go, get thee out, for Herod will kill thee;* but he replied, *Go tell that fox, that I do cures to-day, and to-morrow, &c. &c.* And why did he call him a fox? Because of his cunning; and because of his unjust cruelty against the Lord's poultry. *How often, saith Christ, would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* Two thousand of these chickens the former fox, who was of the same family, had killed, and now sought the life of the hen herself; nor could they rest till they had killed both the dam and its young. Deut. xxxii. 11; xxii. 6. It was Herod and his men of war who arrayed Christ, mocked him, and set him at nought; and to all this the Lord alludes, when he calls it *the word of his patience*, and cautions us against being entangled by Satan in this hour of temptation.

Women, too, young and old, are breathing out slaughter against the ruling powers. Tom Paine and Satan have stuffed their heads full of politics. I think these had better guide the house, teach their children to read, and take in a little plain work. And old men, also, half in the grave and half out, can revile the gods, and speak evil of the rulers of the people,

people. These seem determined to act like Barabbas, ferment a spirit of *insurrection*. I believe the two thieves had some hand in this ; and, if they had, they were honest, especially one of them, for he declared *that they suffered justly, and received the due reward of their deeds*. Luke xxiii. 41. But sure I am, that the god of this world must be awfully let loose upon us, when so many are trying to put *the foundations of the earth out of course, and to make the dark places of it full of the habitations of cruelty*. If civil magistrates are taken up in the lips of talkers, and become the table chat and scorn of women, the sport of children, and the song of drunkards, we may fear that God and religion will soon be the same ; for if they honour not the king, they will soon tell us that they fear not God. And not a few, who eat the bread of the governors, are in this spirit of rebellion. These are like Ahithophel and Judas, eat of their masters bread, and lift up their heels against them. *But the deceitful, and him that loveth violence, my God hateth.*

Once more. It doth not appear, as some imagine, that civil magistracy will be destroyed when the universal kingdom of Christ is set up ; for although it is said, *that the thrones were cast down*, yet it means only *the thrones of iniquity, which frame mischief by a law ; these shall have no fellowship with Christ*. But the thrones shall then be established in righteousness, and be uphelden by mercy. For the nations and kingdoms that will not serve Christ, shall

shall perish; those kingdoms shall be utterly wasted, as those nations were that rejected Nebuchadnezzar's yoke. But as it is, the kings of the earth that shall hate the whore, and burn her with fire, it is plain that these kings will fight for the Lord against all those kings and kingdoms that fight against him for Antichrist. Moreover, when the fulness of the Gentiles come to Zion's light, *kings shall come to the brightness of her rising*; yea, it is added, *and kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers*. Nor will the world be left without princes; for the Father's promise to Christ is, *that instead of thy fathers* (such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, &c.), *shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth*. Nor shall the world be without officers, nor yet without tax-gatherers. *I will also make thine officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy wall salvation, and thy gates praise. The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory; thy people also shall all be righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.* Isa. lx. 17—22. Let none of us listen to our charmers, our enchanters, and dreamers, who have got nothing in their heads but anarchy, nor any thing in their hearts but strife
and

and contention ; for civil rulers shall rule, in defiance of all the unruly, till Christ comes to judge the world. *But every man in his own order : Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* 1 Cor. xv. 23—26.

Thus I have shewed you, that those nations that submitted to the Babylonian yoke stood, and so shall that nation that submits to Christ and his word. Those nations that refused Nebuchadnezzar's yoke were destroyed ; and those nations that refuse the yoke of Christ shall be utterly wasted. Those of God's professing people who obeyed the Lord's voice, and fell away to the Chaldeans, lived, and returned again ; and those who obey the Lord's voice now, and keep the word of his patience, and be subject to the higher powers, shall be kept from the hour of temptation. The disobedient and gain-saying Jews fell by the famine, pestilence, and sword. And the unruly now, who are disobedient to God refuse to obey his word, and resist the powers, shall be taken in this hour of temptation, and shall receive to themselves damnation.

Moreover, I have shewed you, that, from the time that the Jews fell away to the Chaldeans unto the time of their return to their own land, was
seventy

seventy years ; and if the man of sin was revealed or manifested to the world, so as to be seen and known to be the son of perdition, in the year 606, as many affirm, it is plain, that as he is to continue but 1260 years, that from the time of the beginning of this hour of temptation to his destruction will be the same date ; so that 67 or 68 years more will bring him to his own place : his time now is within the age of man. But the difference between the eastern way of reckoning and ours, or the difference which the solar and lunar years may make, I must leave to the learned.

When the Jews went into captivity, all the threatenings of heaven against Babylon were sent to Babylon after them in a book, which was to be read in Babylon, *and then it was to be bound up with a stone in it, and to be cast into the midst of Euphrates, and it was to be said, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.* Jer. li. 63, 64. This is repeated against mystery Babylon. *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.* Rev. xviii. 21. There were some few even of the false prophets who imbibed Jeremiah's doctrine, and advanced it ; but God's word in their mouth was neither a hammer nor a fire ; and therefore these did not escape : *I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my word every one from his neighbour.* Jer. xxiii. 30. Hence the
flying

flying roll pursued these as well as the others ; for the curse was not only to enter into the house of him that sweareth falsely, but into the house of the *thief* also. Zech. v. 4.

The ministry of Jeremiah was to separate the obedient from the disobedient. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, If thou return, then I will bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me : and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth : let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall, and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee : for I am with thee to save thee, and to deliver thee, saith the Lord. And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.* Jer. xv. 19—21. The vile from the precious were to be known by their subjection or non subjection to the higher powers. The highest ruling power then in the world was the king of Babylon, and God had made him so, though he was nothing but a poor pagan. Those that believed the word of the Lord, and fell to the Chaldeans, were the precious ; and those who rejected the word of the Lord, and fought against the king of Babylon, were the vile. These, and all the heathen nations that disobeyed the Lord, were doomed to destruction. To destroy these rebels afterwards was the work of the Lord ; and every one that held back his sword from them was to be cursed of God. *Cursed be he that doeth the work of*

the Lord deceitfully; and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood. Jer. xlvii. 10.

I have had some of the same fighting against me as Jeremiah had against him. There was a knot of young wise men among us, who were great readers and admirers of Tom Paine; and when they became strong in the bonds of iniquity, Satan found access to their hearts, and by him they conceived no small degree of envy; and their malice and prejudice began to rise so high against me, that some of them could hardly keep silence in the house of God. My discourse on *the Books and the Parchments* exasperated them to the highest pitch of desperation and madness; and when that son of Belial came among you from Plymouth Dock, they then thought to seek revenge, or to avenge themselves on me; the secret leaven of malice and wickedness that had long worked within them boiled up, and ran over, the cockatrice eggs were broken, and out came the vipers. *He whose hatred is covered with deceit, his wickedness shall be shewn before the whole congregation.* Prov. xxvi. 26. God had shewn me this, nine months before it happened, in a dream, which I then told to Mr. Morgan and Mr. Winkworth. And at this time he gave me also another dream similar to the former, which shewed me what we were to do; God had then discovered the vile, and we were to separate them from the precious, while the Spirit of God in the souls of the righteous, separated them from their affections:

fections : and what the Lord of life and glory foretold may be visibly seen in many of them at this day ; namely, that they who abide not in the vine are cast forth as a branch, and are withered, and men gather them, that is, wicked men gather them into their company, and they are burned. In less than six months after the second arrival of the above-mentioned son of Belial, and after a second influence under his *alluring through the lust of the flesh and much wantonness*, not less than six persons were known to give themselves up to the sin of adultery, and are now gone over to the awful tribunal of God :—*the whoremonger and the adulterer God will judge.*

I know, at this time, several individuals, who lay near to my heart, and who have drank into this spirit of disaffection and rebellion, who are visibly smitten of God ; the hand of God has gone out against two, in a way of providence, even till they wonder what can be the cause. I know the cause. Three more I know who are, or have been, under the arrests of divine justice in their consciences, and so smitten with the terrors of God, and at the same time cherishing rebellion and madness in their hearts, till their sleep has departed from them ; and others have been smitten in other ways, and it must be so : for those who make to themselves crooked ways shall not know peace. Crooked ways are those ways that are contrary to God ; and this is resisting his will, and resisting the ordinance of God,

and cherishing a spirit of rebellion against the very powers which God hath set up, and which protect us in the worship of God ; and such can expect to fare no better than those who conspired with Absalom against David.

I am not alone in my testimony ; I have two true yokefellows, whose names stand at the front of this discourse, whom God hath set as iron pillars to resist this spirit of Satan.

God hath visibly mingled a perverse spirit among these opposers ; and many who have longed for the overthrow, and have at times been almost ready to shout for victory, have hitherto been disappointed, notwithstanding all the mutterings and conspiracies which have taken place—and I know *they have erred in every work of theirs, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit.* Isa. xix. 14. And whatever it is to terminate in, whether in a pestilence, or what not, the promoters of it shall most surely fare the worst in it ; and those who keep the word of the Lord's patience, shall be kept from ruin and destruction in this hour of temptation. And God shall shew you, in due time, whether this my work, or this my counsel, be of God, or of man.

Nor shall you ever run from this my testimony, for I am made manifest in your consciences ; if you are sent to hell, as a favour of death unto death, I shall pursue you, and my testimony will stand against you, and you shall see me with the eyes of your mind, even there, as a witness against you :—

as sure as Moses accused the Jews in the days of Christ for their rejection of him, and as sure as the rich glutton in hell saw the beggar Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham. And if you are obedient to the word of the Lord, as a favour of life unto life, you shall acknowledge me to the end; for those that bear precious seed shall return again rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. I know where this my teaching, and this my testimony, came from, and I know it is of God; therefore remember that I have admonished you, cautioned you, and warned you this day. Thus I have complied, also, with the request of them who wished me so much to print it, which is what I did not intend; but as I had seven discourses to deliver so soon after the delivery of this, it cannot be expected that I could put it down just as it was delivered. And furthermore, as some persons wished me to publish the last Sunday morning's discourse, delivered from Dan. ii. 45, I have interwoven a few of the heads of that in this discourse, which must suffice for the present, as I have so little time on my hands.

